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MISCELLANEOUS.

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BOOK III.

SECTION I.

Stories from Church History.

1.

ST. POLYCARP, A.D. 166.

as-cen-sion, *a going up.*
ex-e-cu-tion-er, *a person who puts a criminal to death.*
im-i-tate, *to copy.*
ce-le-brate, *to keep a feast.*
ex-tin-guish, *to put out.*
pro-claim, *to call out.*

For three hundred years after the Ascension of our Divine Lord into heaven, the Church which He had planted on earth was exposed to violent and bloody persecutions. The Roman emperors and their pagan subjects hated the religion of Jesus Christ, because it made war upon all those sinful practices in which they indulged. The more it spread among the people, the more did their rulers resolve to crush it, and year after year great numbers of Christians were put to the most cruel deaths. Some were racked and torn to pieces, others were burnt, and a great number were thrown to the wild-beasts to be devoured, whilst crowds assembled to enjoy the horrible sight. It would be quite impossible to give any idea of the numbers of these glorious martyrs

yet, in spite of the thousands who were thus put to death, the efforts of the pagans were without success, and the faith for which the Christians shed their blood only spread the wider.

About the year 160, the Church of Smyrna in Asia was governed by a holy bishop named Polycarp. He was a very old man, and had been made bishop by the Apostle St. John. Indeed, he had seen and known most of our Lord's Apostles, and this of itself made all men regard him with respect. But St. Polycarp deserved the love and reverence of his people, not only because he had known the Apostles, but because he faithfully imitated them; and such was the honour in which he was held, that the Pope himself used often to consult him, and take his advice.

St. Polycarp had always wished to die for Jesus Christ. Fifty years before, he had gone to meet his best and dearest friend St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, when he was on his road to Rome to be devoured by the wild-beasts. St. Ignatius had also been a disciple of St. John; and it is thought that he was the little child whom our Lord took up in His arms and blessed. When St. Polycarp saw him going to martyrdom, he shed tears, saying, "Alas, why am I not found worthy to die in such a cause?" "Dear brother," replied St. Ignatius, "be not sad, for your time will also come; but wait awhile, for at present the Lord has need of you."

For fifty years, therefore, St. Polycarp had laboured for God, waiting patiently for his reward. He had comforted his flock in the midst of their sufferings, and converted many to the faith; and now, when a fresh persecution had broken out, the pagans began to raise the cry of "Polycarp to the lions!" They sent some soldiers to seize him in

his own house; and Polycarp, who well knew why they had come, received them as though they had been his best friends, and caused dinner to be set before them. He only asked that, as a favour, they would suffer him to pray for one hour without being disturbed; and when they had granted his request, he prayed aloud for the whole Church of Christ. The soldiers listened to him with wonder and respect; and then they set him on an ass, and bore him away to the city.

When he stood before his judges, they too were touched with admiration at his noble bearing and his venerable white hairs. They did all they could to persuade him to save his life by sacrificing to their idols; but Polycarp told them they only lost their time. The people meanwhile crowded together, thirsting for his blood, and again and again the horrid cry rang through the air of "Polycarp to the lions!"

Then the judges once more sought to move him, and to persuade him to blaspheme Christ. "Eighty and six years have I served Him," replied the saint, "and He has never done me any wrong. How, then, can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?" "I have wild-beasts at hand," said the judge; "if you will not obey me, you shall presently be thrown to them." "Call them," replied Polycarp. "What!" said the judge, "do you despise the beasts? Well, then I will have you burnt with fire." "Your fire," replied Polycarp, "will soon be extinguished; you know not of that eternal fire which God reserves for the wicked."

Then the judge rose in anger, and proclaimed aloud that Polycarp had confessed himself a Christian, and that he was sentenced to be burnt alive. The people at once set about collecting a great heap of wood, and whilst they were doing so, the vener

able old man calmly prepared for death. When all was ready, the executioner wanted to nail him to the stake, but Polycarp would not let him. "Let me be as I am," he said; "God will give me strength to bear the torture of the fire without moving away."

And now he stood with his hands bound behind him, and his eyes raised to heaven whilst he prayed aloud. The executioner set fire to the pile, and the bright flames darted into the air. Then appeared a wonderful sight. For as the flames rose on every side, they seemed to swell out in a curve, as when the sail of a ship is filled with the wind, so that they did not touch the body of the martyr, but formed a wall around him, and an arch over his head. And in the midst of the flames his holy body was seen, not like burning flesh, but glowing as brightly as gold, whilst a perfume as of sweet incense was perceived by all who stood around.

At last his enemies seeing that the fire would not burn him, ordered the executioner to go and plunge a sword into his body, when such a stream of blood flowed forth as to put out the fire; and the multitude were filled with wonder, and asked one another how it was that Christians were so different from other men.

Thus died the glorious St. Polycarp, on the 23d of January A.D. 166; and his feast is kept by the Church on the 26th of the same month. The Christians succeeded in collecting his bones, which they laid in his own church of Smyrna; and every year they assembled on that day at his tomb, where they joyfully celebrated the birthday of the holy martyr.

2.

ST. LAWRENCE, A.D. 258.

dis-trib-ute, *to divide among a number.*
in-struct, *to teach.*
conflict, *a fight, a struggle.*
mag-is-trate, *a ruler, an officer of the city.*
ex-quis-ite, *very delicate and rare.*

In the year 257, the Church was governed by a holy Pope named Sixtus. He had chosen as his deacon a young man called Lawrence, whom he greatly loved for his singular piety and virtue, and had given him the charge of distributing the alms of the Church among the poor. St. Lawrence looked on St. Sixtus in the light of a father, not only because the Pope is the common father of all the faithful, but also because it was he who had brought him up and instructed him in the faith. He therefore loved and respected him in a special way, and he showed himself well worthy of the trust which St. Sixtus had placed in his hands.

It was about this time that the Emperor Valerian had made a resolution to destroy the Church by causing every one of the bishops and priests to be put to death. He had already seized upon a great number of them, and now he laid his hands on the venerable old Pontiff, who was at once condemned to death. As they were leading him to the place of execution, St. Lawrence followed after him weeping bitterly, and saying, "My father, whither are you going without your son? you were never wont to offer sacrifice without your deacon," But St. Sixtus comforted him, and replied, "My son, I leave you but for a time; a nobler conflict is in store for you, and in three days you too will follow."

When St. Lawrence heard these words, he knew

that his martyrdom was at hand, and full of joy, he made all haste to prepare for it. He called the poor of the city together, and divided among them all the money that was left in his hands, for he feared lest these treasures might be seized by the pagans. Soon after he had done this, the magistrate sent for him, and ordered him to give up all the vessels of gold and silver and all the money which belonged to the Church, as the emperor had need of it to pay his troops. "You are indeed right," said St. Lawrence, "in thinking that we Christians have great treasures. There are none so precious to be found in the whole empire, and if you will give me three days, I will set them in order for you."

Delighted to get such an answer, they gave him the time he asked for; and St. Lawrence spent it in collecting all the poor and sick people who were supported by the alms of the faithful. He then led the magistrate to the place where they had all assembled, and showing them to him, he said, "Behold the treasures of the Church!" When the magistrate saw nothing but a crowd of beggars and cripples, he was very angry. "Is it thus you mock me?" he said; "but you shall dearly repent your insolence, for I will make you die by inches."

Then he caused St Lawrence to be seized and cruelly beaten, after which he had a large gridiron made and placed over a fire, on which the saint was bound and slowly roasted. But such was the love which burnt in the breast of the holy martyr, that he showed no signs of pain; and those among the Christians who looked on him as he lay among the flames, saw his face surrounded by a heavenly light, whilst his burning flesh gave forth an exquisite odour.

When the cruel judge came near to insult him, and to enjoy the sight of his torments, St. Lawrence

smiled sweetly, and said cheerfully, "Will you not turn me? this side is broiled enough." He lingered for many hours, during which time he ceased not to pray aloud for mercy for the world and for Rome. He loved his country dearly; and he asked God to spare it and convert it for the sake of those two great Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, who had first brought the light of faith to that city, and who had watered it with their blood. Then he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and having finished his prayer, he breathed out his soul to Christ. No martyr has ever been more highly honoured by the Church than St. Lawrence; and the conversion of the Roman empire was afterwards looked on as having been in some degree granted in answer to his dying prayer.

His body was buried at Rome on the 10th of August, which is kept as his feast; and the church raised over his body is one of the holy places of pilgrimage in that city.

3.

ST. CYRIL, A.D. 260.

con-fid-ence, *trust.*
su-per-sti-tion, *a false way of worshiping God.*
im-me-di-ate-ly, *at once.*
re-nounce, *to give up.*

We must not suppose that none but priests and bishops died as martyrs. Many soldiers of the empire were put to death; and besides these, a great number of women, and even of children, bravely confessed the faith.

Among these was a young boy named Cyril, whose father was a pagan, and turned his son out of doors because he would not worship idols. Cyril had been baptised and instructed; and it is said that he had so great a love for our Divine Lord, that the name of Jesus was almost always on his lips.

That sweet name gave him courage and confidence, and he felt sure that if his earthly father deserted him, his Heavenly Father would never give him up.

When the governor of the city heard what had happened, he sent for Cyril, and said to him, "My boy, I will pardon your fault because you are a mere child. Your father, too, has consented to take you back home again; so all you have to do is to give up your foolish superstitions;" for it was thus that the pagans always spoke of Christianity. But Cyril at once replied, "I am not afraid; God will take me, and I shall be better off with Him than with my father." "Silly child!" said the governor; "will you wander about, without a home to go to, or a place in which to lay your head?" "I shall have a larger and a better home in heaven," said Cyril. "I do not fear to die, for after this life there is another life which is far better."

Then the governor tried to frighten him; he had his hands bound, and led him to a great burning pile. "Do you see that?" he said. "This pile is to burn you, if you will not renounce Christ." Cyril did not even reply, but walked firmly up as though to give himself to the flames. Beside the pile stood a soldier with a huge sword, but Cyril showed no fear. "Come, now," said the governor, as he led him back again, "you have seen what fire is, and what a sword is like; will you be a good child now, and go home to your father, and do as he has bid you?"

"I wish you had not brought me back," replied Cyril; "I want to go to my own home. I do not fear either the fire or the sword; I only want to go to God, for I know that He will welcome me. Kill me, then, that I may go to Him without more delay." As he spoke these words, even the cruel pagans who stood round him shed tears; but the governor told

him he should have his wish. He was taken back to the place of execution, and was immediately put to death, about the year of our Lord 260.

4.

ST. DOROTHEA, A.D. 300.

fa-mi-li-ar, *well known.*
dis-lo-cat-ed, *put out of joint.*
e-rect-ed, *raised, built.*
fra-grance, *sweet smell.*
pre-fect, *a Roman magistrate.*

Our last story of the age of martyrdom shall be about one of those virgin saints whose memory is so honoured by the Church of Christ. The names of St. Catharine and St. Agnes, St. Lucy and St. Cecilia, are familiar to us all, and to many of us no doubt their stories are well known also. Young as they were, they despised alike the pleasures and the flatteries of the world. They chose God alone as their portion and inheritance, and He has highly exalted them, and placed their names amongst those of the other glorious martyrs whose memory is daily honoured in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

St. Dorothea was another of these virgin saints; she was born in the city of Cesarea in Asia, and her family was rich and noble. But Dorothea had embraced the faith of Christ, for whose sake she had given up all that the world could offer her; and during the last of those ten terrible persecutions which steeped the Church in the blood of martyrs, she was seized and carried before the Roman prefect of the city.

Having refused to deny her faith, Dorothea was condemned to death, and a great crowd had assembled in the court to see this noble virgin first tortured and then beheaded. We may form some idea of the wickedness of the pagan nations from the fact

that sights like these made one of their favourite amusements: even ladies would go to the theatre, and look on with delight whilst the Christians were being torn to pieces by the beasts; and many of those who now came to gaze at the tortures of St. Dorothea had in former years been her intimate friends and companions.

Among the other persons who were present in the court, was a young man named Theophilus, who had formerly known St. Dorothea, and who felt a strong hope that she might even yet be induced to save her life by giving up her religion.

The torture which was first tried on St. Dorothea was that of the rack. This was a machine which was made so as to stretch every part of the body till each joint was dislocated, so as to cause the most dreadful pain. But Dorothea bore it with the utmost patience; and when the executioner came with hooks and red-hot pincers to tear her flesh, she only smiled with joy to think that she was counted worthy to suffer for her Divine Spouse.

At last, when they were weary of torturing her, they took her from the rack and led her out to be beheaded. "Dorothea," said the judge, "will you not now confess your folly, and pray for pardon from the immortal gods?"

"I pray to the God of heaven and earth to pardon and have mercy upon you," replied the martyr, "and I will so pray when I reach the Land whither I am presently going."

"Of what land do you speak?" asked the judge, who, like most of the pagans, had very little notion about another world.

"I speak of that Land where Christ the Son of God dwells with His saints," replied St. Dorothea. "*There* is neither night nor sorrow; *there* is the *river of* Life, and the brightness of eternal glory;

and *there* is a paradise of all delight, and flowers that shall never fade."

"I pray you, then," said Theophilus, who was listening to her words with pity mingled with wonder, "if these things be so, to send me some of those flowers when you shall have reached the land you speak of."

Dorothea looked at him as he spoke, and then she answered, "Theophilus, you shall have the sign you ask for." There was no time for more; the executioner placed her before the block, and in another moment one blow of his heavy sword had struck off the head of the holy martyr.

"Those were strange words," said Theophilus to one of his friends, as they were about to leave the court; "but these Christians are not like other people."

"Their obstinacy is altogether surprising," said his friend; "death itself will never make them waver. But who is this, Theophilus?" he continued, as a young boy came up to them of such singular beauty, that the eyes of all were fixed upon him with wonder and admiration.

He seemed not more than ten years old; his golden hair fell on his shoulders, and in his hand he bore four roses, two white and two red, but of so brilliant a colour and so rich a fragrance, that their like had never before been seen.

He held them out to Theophilus. "These flowers are for you," he said; "will you not take them?"

"And whence do you bring them, my boy?" asked Theophilus. "From Dorothea," he replied; "and they are the sign you even now asked for." "Roses, and in winter-time!" said Theophilus, as he took the flowers, "yea, and such roses as never blossomed in any earthly garden. Prefect, your

task is not yet ended; your sword has slain one Christian, but it has made another; I too profess the faith for which Dorothea died."

Within another hour Theophilus was condemned to death by the enraged prefect; and on the spot where Dorothea had been beheaded, he too poured forth his blood, and obtained the crown of martyrdom. The Church keeps the feast of both on the same day,* and a stately church in the city of Rome is erected to the memory of St. Dorothea and St. Theophilus.

5.

THE CATACOMBS.

as-sem-ble, *to meet together.*
con-struct, *to make.*
prin-ci-pal, *chief.*
re-cess-es, *holes, hiding-places.*
in-crease, *to make larger.*

WHILST the persecutions of the Christians were raging, it was of course impossible for them to practise their religion in public. When, therefore, they wished to hold their assemblies, or celebrate any of the holy offices of their religion, they were forced to do so in some secret place. In Rome and some other cities of the empire, they made for themselves secret hiding-places, which also served as burial-places for their dead. They were long under-ground galleries or passages, which were dug out of the soft sandstone, and which have received the name of Catacombs.

Chapels and other chambers were also formed in the same way, in some of which the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered over the tomb of a martyr, the walls being covered with paintings representing the seven Sacraments, the principal events

* February 6.

of the Old and New Testament, or other devout subjects.

Here, then, the faithful often took refuge at times when the persecution raged most hotly, and these under-ground caverns formed the first Christian churches. The light of day never found its way into their recesses, which were, however, lit up by a number of earthenware lamps fixed into the walls, and kept burning before almost every tomb. In some of these chambers we can still see the seat for the bishop and his clergy, the altar, and the little table by its side, on which were placed the bread and wine which were to be used in the Holy Sacrifice.

The Catacombs were, however, chiefly intended as burial-places for the dead, and a particular order of men were appointed, called *diggers*, who were charged with this duty. The graves were narrow shelves, cut out of the rock one above another, and closed by a slab of marble, on which was scratched the name of the person buried there, with some short prayer for his soul, or other pious sentence. If he were a martyr, they added a palm-branch, and a bottle containing the precious relic of his blood. Many of these bottles, as well as of the little lamps before spoken of, are still found in the Roman Catacombs; and a great number of the bodies themselves are to be seen lying in their narrow graves, with the remains of the linen cloths in which they were wrapped.

Many of the paintings are also still to be seen, painted by the hands of the early Christians themselves; and their favourite subject of all was that of our Lord as the Good Shepherd, that is, bearing on His shoulders a sheep of His flock. Sometimes He is painted with a *goat* instead of a sheep. This was to point out His tender love for sinners (who are

spoken of in Scripture under the figure of goats), and the patient mercy with which He seeks for them to bear them back to His fold.

A great many of the customs and ceremonies still in use among us had their beginning in the Christian Catacombs. Thus, as you know, there is scarcely any religious ceremony at all at which we do not use one or more lighted tapers. This probably began from the necessity of having lights in those under-ground caverns. Afterwards, when the persecutions ceased, and the Christians built their churches above ground, they kept this custom in order to remind themselves, with reverence, of the days when their fathers suffered such great things for their faith. They also arranged their churches just in the same way as before; and as in the Catacombs the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass had always been offered over the tombs of the martyrs, it was made a rule that every Christian altar should contain within it the relics of some saint. This rule is still strictly kept.

When we know these things, it ought to increase our reverence and devotion in assisting at any of the holy offices of the Church: for there is not a ceremony or a prayer which has not been used by countless saints and martyrs, and which is not intended to put us in mind of their great actions, and to fill us with the desire of following in their steps.

6.

THE CONVERSION OF CONSTANTINE, A.D. 312.

ty-rant, *a ruler who oppresses his people.*
sur-pass-ing, *going beyond.*
em-blem, *a sign.*
un-i-ver-sal, *what is every where.*

For three hundred years did the pagan world wage

war upon the Church of Christ, yet the numbers of the Christians daily increased, in spite of every effort to crush them, till, as one of the writers of the time describes it, the larger half of every city in the empire was Christian. They were to be found in all conditions of life; and slaves, nobles, soldiers, and artisans alike swelled the ranks of the white-robed army of martyrs.

At last the time came which was chosen by God to give peace to His Church. About the year 312, the empire of Rome was divided among three emperors. Italy was ruled by a cruel and savage tyrant named Maxentius, whilst Britain, Gaul, and the other countries of the West fell to the share of a young prince whose name was Constantine. His father had been governor of Britain, and he himself was born in the city of York. He was not a Christian, but he had heard much of the Christian religion; and both he and his father had shown themselves just and merciful, and inclined to believe in the existence of one true God. It was not long before war broke out between Maxentius and Constantine; and the latter having resolved to lead his army to the gates of Rome, caused prayers to be first offered to the God of the Christians, "praying Him to show Himself to him, and to reach out His hand to him in his present need."

This act on the part of Constantine met with its reward. God saw that his heart was prepared to receive the true faith, and He did not reject his prayer. As he was marching across the plains of Burgundy, on his way to Italy, there suddenly appeared to him a wonderful sign, which blazed in the noonday heavens. Just above the sun, and surpassing it in brightness, he saw a Cross, and above it the words, "By this sign thou shalt conquer." It was seen not only by him, but also by all his

soldiers; and the same night as he slept in his tent, our Lord appeared to him, and showing him the same sign, bade him take it for his standard, promising him that if he did so, he should not fail to gain the victory over his enemies.

When Constantine awoke, his first care was to cause a standard to be made like that which he had seen in his vision. It was formed of a spear covered with gold, having a cross fastened to the top. Above the cross was a royal crown of gold, blazing with jewels, and bearing the two first letters of the name of Christ. From the cross there hung a small banner of purple silk fringed with gold, and sparkling with precious stones; and this standard was given to a guard of fifty chosen men, who bore it at the head of the army.

Constantine and his soldiers now marched on with full confidence that God was with them, and He would give victory to their arms. Having crossed the Alps, and defeated the troops sent against them by Maxentius, they pressed on till they came before the gates of Rome. Maxentius marched out to meet them at the head of his guards, who were the bravest troops in the world, and famous throughout the whole empire. At night, the two armies were posted close to one another, and waited only till the day dawned in order to begin the battle.

Constantine spent the night in prayer; and as he was thus engaged, our Lord again appeared to him, and told him to fasten the cross on the shields and helmets of his troops. He obeyed as before; and when the day broke at last, the first rays of the October sun shone on the Christian emblem as it glittered on the arms of the soldiers.

The battle began with great fury. The Roman guards would not yield an inch of ground; but at

last Constantine himself led his horsemen against them. The struggle was a fierce one, but wherever the standard of the Cross appeared, victory was sure to follow; and one half of the Roman troops having been defeated, the rest fled back in confusion, and tried to re-enter the city. But as they were crossing a bridge over the Tiber, it broke down under their weight; and Maxentius himself, with a great number of his followers, fell into the river and were drowned.

The next day Constantine entered Rome in triumph. The Cross was still borne at the head of his troops, and another cross was set up in the very midst of the city, with an inscription which declared that by that sign of salvation, and that alone, Rome had been delivered by Constantine from the yoke of the tyrant.

The first act of the new emperor was to give peace to the whole Christian Church. The Christians were loosed from their prisons, and called back from banishment. Superb churches were built for them, to which Constantine offered the most costly gifts; and the palace, which had until now been the residence of the Roman emperors, was given up to the Pope, who turned it into a church, which is now the cathedral church of Rome, and is called by the name of St. John Lateran. In the porch of this church may be seen the statue of the first Christian emperor, bearing in his hands the sacred standard of the Cross, which now became the object of universal veneration.

7.

JULIAN THE APOSTATE.

prod-i-gies, *wonders, miracles.* im-plored, begged.
rear, *the hinder part of any thing.*

CONSTANTINE was succeeded by his three sons, an

after their death their cousin Julian became emperor. Julian was a man of learning, and had proved himself a brave soldier. In his youth he had been baptised; but as he grew up he showed a hatred to every thing Christian, and at last he openly abjured the faith, and declared himself a pagan. He rebuilt the pagan temples, and caused the sacrifices and other heathen rites to be once more offered; and he set plans on foot for destroying Christianity altogether, and restoring the pagan worship throughout the empire. This is why he is called "the *Apostate*," because that word means one who renounces or gives up the true faith.

Julian was in some ways a greater enemy to the Christian Church than any of the pagan emperors who had reigned before him. He did all he could to divide the Christians among themselves, and he committed many dreadful acts of sacrilege. He robbed the churches of their most sacred vessels, which he gave to the idols of the pagans; and those of the clergy who resisted him were tortured, imprisoned, or put to death.

He was, of course, well acquainted with the Gospels; and remembering that our Lord had prophesied that not one stone of the Jewish temple at Jerusalem should be left on another, he resolved to rebuild that temple, in order to show that our Divine Lord's words were false. He therefore employed a great number of workmen to begin the work. But no sooner had they dug out the foundations, than an earthquake overthrew all the buildings near, and killed the workmen; and on a second attempt being made, great bodies of flaming fire came up out of the ground, and melted even the very tools used by the men, burying them in the ruins. Thus did God show them that not one word of His should be doubted; and great numbers of

Jews and pagans who beheld the miracle were converted and baptised.

But no signs or prodigies could touch the heart of the Emperor Julian. He spent his reign in making war upon the faith of Christ, whom he always spoke of as "the Galilean," in order to show his contempt. He had now engaged in a war with the Persians, and in the year 363 he set out for the Persian frontiers at the head of a powerful army.

That army was not led on by the standard of the Cross; Julian had once more set up the standard of the old pagan empire, and before beginning his march had sacrificed to all the heathen gods. Yet there were many Christians among his soldiers, and some, like the brave Jovian, who commanded the guards, had refused at the risk of their lives to join in these sacrifices to the idols.

It was a hot, burning day, and Julian had ridden forward without his armour to view the line of march. Suddenly one of his officers galloped up to say that the Persians had attacked the rear of the army. Julian caught a shield from one of his soldiers, and rode to the scene of battle. He led on his troops, and the Persians were driven back in confusion. But as he fought surrounded by his guards, he was wounded by a javelin from some unknown hand. In vain he declared that the hurt was nothing; his officers forced him from the field, and the surgeons came to bind up the wound.

In spite of all their efforts, however, they could not stop the flow of blood; the wound seemed a mere trifle, and yet no skill of theirs was able to dress it. Julian was dying fast, but he would not believe it, and bade them bring him his horse, and he would show them how idle were their fears. But as he tried to mount he fell back fainting into the arms of his attendants. "Thou hast conquered,

O Galilean!" he exclaimed, as he felt the hand of death was on him; and dipping his hand into the blood which poured from his wound, he cast it towards heaven, and in another moment he expired.

Thus died the impious apostate; and the same day the army offered the imperial crown to the brave Jovian, and implored him to lead them against the Persians. "I will not be the leader of idolaters," was his reply; "for I am a Christian, and in the God of the Christians alone do I put my trust." Then they all shouted aloud, "Fear not, for we too are Christians; the reign of the apostate has not made us forget the faith which we learnt from the great Constantine and his sons." So once again the Cross was displayed as the standard of the empire; and Jovian, making peace with the Persians, returned to Greece, and set about to restore the faith, and to heal all the evils and sufferings which Julian had brought upon the Church.

8.

THE BARBARIANS.

grad-u-al-ly, *by degrees.* pe-ri-od, *a space of time.* re-viv-ing, *coming to life again.*

After Constantine had become master of the empire, he removed his capital from Rome to a new city which he had built in Greece, and which was called after him Constantinople. Rome itself during the next two centuries received a terrible punishment for all the crimes and idolatries of her people. The pagan city, which had been the seat of every vice and luxury, and which had shed the blood of so many thousand Christian martyrs, was given up into the hands of the barbarous nations of the north. They burst over the Alps, and poured down over the

plains of Italy, burning and destroying every thing before them. Rome was taken, burnt, and plundered three times, and little was left of the old pagan city save a mass of ruins.

The sufferings of these times were very great, but in God's good providence these terrible invasions had one good effect. They swept away all remains of *paganism;* and as the barbarians themselves were gradually converted to the faith, they became the founders of new Christian states.

For a great number of years, however, the countries in the west of Europe suffered every kind of misery; their cities were burnt, their fields laid waste, and their people carried off into slavery. The arts and learning of the great Roman empire were almost entirely lost, and men would have sunk back into barbarism if it had not been for one power which was exerted at this period to teach and to give light to the world.

That power was the Christian Church, ruled as she was by a long line of great and holy Popes. They alone dared to resist the barbarians, and more than once they were the means of saving the people from their fury. They did all they could to preserve learning and civilisation, at a time when books and works of art were being every where destroyed. And they spared no pains to convert the barbarians themselves, and to soften their wild and savage nature by bringing it under the influence of the Christian faith.

One of the Popes who lived during this period was St. Leo the Great. In his time the Huns, a savage people of Asia, had invaded Europe, and under their king Attila had committed every kind of violence. Attila called himself "the scourge of God," and it was his boast that "no grass ever grew again where his horse's hoofs had trod." He now swore that he would lay siege to Rome, which w

only just reviving, after it had been sacked by the Goths, another barbarous nation; and the people, full of terror, knew not how to defend themselves.

Then St. Leo offered to go and meet Attila, and to turn him from his purpose. It seemed a daring plan; but St. Leo put his trust in God, and did not fear the fury of the barbarians. He set out from Rome, and having come up with Attila, who was marching towards the city at the head of 700,000 savage troops, he boldly entered the presence of the king. Attila was a man of the most terrible aspect, and his very look inspired fear. His complexion was dark, his nose almost flat to his face, and his eyes red and fiery. No one had ever been known to resist him, nor had he ever been known to show mercy to living man. But as St. Leo spoke to him, and forbade him in God's name to advance further, he trembled. It is said that he saw in the air, above the Pontiff's head, the figures of St. Peter and St. Paul, who threatened him and seemed to drive him back. "I know not how it is," he said to those around him, "but I cannot resist the words of that old man." And within a few days the great army of the Huns was marching back to the north; and Rome was saved from their violence by the devoted courage of her holy Pope.

9.

THE COUNCIL OF EPHESUS, A.D. 431.

he-re-sy, *a false doctrine.* in-dig-na-tion, *anger.*
de-fined, *settled, declared.* il-lu-min-a-ted, *lighted up.*

THE invasions of the barbarians were not the only troubles by which the Church was afflicted during these early centuries. A far worse evil was to be found in the heresies which sprang up within her own fold. Men arose who denied her most sacred

doctrines, and at different times the bishops of the Church had to meet together from all parts in order to condemn their errors. These great meetings of the bishops were called General Councils, and in them the Creeds of the Church were drawn up, and her faith defined.

The first of these Councils met at Nice, to condemn the Arians, who denied that our Blessed Lord was God as well as man; and then the Creed was made which is called the Nicene Creed, and which we sing in the Mass.

It is, however, of another Council that we are going to speak in this lesson, that of Ephesus, which was held in the year 431, against a heretic named Nestorius, who taught that there were two persons in our Divine Lord, and said that the Blessed Virgin ought not to be called the Mother of God. Now people had been accustomed to give her this title from the earliest times, and they felt the utmost indignation at the impiety of Nestorius. Nowhere was this feeling more general than in the city of Ephesus itself, where our Blessed Lady had lived for many years after the ascension of her Divine Lord, and which was therefore looked on as in a special way the city of Mary.

When the bishops had assembled at Ephesus, they held their meetings in the great church, which was dedicated to our Lady; and during the time that they sat in council crowds of people gathered together in the streets outside, waiting to hear the result. They remained there the whole day, and no man thought of going to his work or his business till the question should be decided, which was so dear to the heart of every true Catholic.

At length the doors of the church were thrown open, and St. Cyril, who was the Pope's legate came out, and declared to the people that the

shops had all agreed in condemning the heresy of Nestorius, and in giving to Mary her glorious title of the "Mother of God." He had scarcely ceased to speak, when the whole crowd burst out into cries of joy. "Mary has conquered!" they exclaimed. "Joy be to the great, the ever-glorious Mother of God!" As the bishops came out, the people received them with loud praises, and led them to their own houses, bearing lighted torches before them. They even burnt rich and sweet-smelling incense in the streets through which they passed, to show how much they honoured those who were ready to defend the holy Catholic faith and the honour of the ever-blessed Virgin. In the evening the city was illuminated as for some great victory, and nothing was omitted to render the triumph of Mary complete. From this time the Church added to the angelic salutation the last part of the Hail Mary: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death."

How happy should we think ourselves to belong to the Church of God, which alone can teach us the true faith, and preserve us from all heresy and error! Let us always show a great love for her teaching, and feel as noble a zeal as that shown by the people of Ephesus for all that concerns the honour of the Mother of God.

10.

THE BAPTISM OF CLOVIS, A.D. 496.

sac-ri-lege, *profanation of holy things.*
com-pas-sion, *pity.*
bap-tis-te-ry, *the place where the font stands.*
chrism, *a holy oil.*
co-ro-na-tion, *a crowning.*

AMONG those barbarous nations of which we have

before spoken, one of the most warlike was that of the Franks, who came out of Germany, and overrunning Gaul, gave to that country the name of France, which it still bears. They were led on by a king named Clovis, who, though he was a heathen and a barbarian, had many great and noble qualities. His wife Clotilda was a Christian; and Clovis, though he knew but little of the Christian religion, always showed a respect for priests and holy places, which he often saved from the sacrilege of his rude followers.

Clovis had been victorious over the people of Gaul; but after he had settled in that country he was himself attacked by another German nation called the Alemanni, whose king led a strong army into the very heart of the country. Clovis at once set out to meet him; but before he did so, his wife implored him to listen to her words. "You are going," she said, "to engage with a powerful enemy: if you wish to have the victory, call upon the God of the Christians, for He alone is the God of armies; and if He protects you, you will gain an easy triumph." Clovis scarcely paid much attention to what she said; but mounting his horse, set out at the head of his followers. It was not long before he came up with the German troops, and a battle took place, in which the Franks were all but defeated. A large part of their army was forced to fly, and the whole strength of the enemy was turned upon the small body of horsemen who were led on by Clovis himself. At that moment of the utmost peril, Clovis thought of Clotilda's warning, and lifting his hands to heaven, he exclaimed, "O Christ, whom Clotilda worships as the Son of God, I implore Thy help; I believe in Thee, and I invoke Thy aid; deliver me from my enemies, and in Thy name I will be baptised."

Scarcely had he uttered the words before troops began to rally. A new strength seei given to them, and again charging on the ranks the Germans, they drove them from the field w great slaughter. When the battle was over, Clo did not forget his promise. He led his army ba to Rheims, where the great St. Remigius was that time bishop, a man whose zeal and piety ha gained him the title of "the second St. Paul. Clovis was by him instructed in the Christian faith and duly prepared for baptism; and when next the king met his wife, it was with the welcome words, "Clovis has triumphed over the Germans, but Clotilda has triumphed over Clovis; my baptism must be no longer delayed." Indeed, the king's conversion was true and sincere; he listened with profound attention to the instructions of the bishop, and showed a lively feeling of tenderness and compassion at the narrative of our Lord's sufferings and death. "Ah," he exclaimed, "if I had been there with my brave Franks, I would have chastised those traitor Jews."

The next feast of Christmas was fixed for the ceremony of his baptism, but Clovis wished that his people also should be led to know and embrace the faith. He therefore called together the chiefs of the nation, in order to explain to them what he was about to do. But before he could address them they saluted him with cries of welcome, "We will follow the faith of Remigius," they cried; "we will worship the one true God who created all things."

Christmas-day at last arrived; and when the morning broke, the people of Rheims beheld the streets of their city adorned as though for a royal festival. The walls of each house were hung with rich curtains, and the streets themselves were carpeted. The church and the baptistery were lighted

up by a forest of wax tapers, which were scented, and as they burnt gave out the most exquisite perfume. Soon through the gaily-decked streets appeared a long procession, headed by young boys carrying a silver cross, and chanting the Litany; then came a long line of mitred bishops; and lastly, the king himself, followed by a vast crowd of his nobles and people, who with him had been prepared for baptism. The splendid scene and its religious character so touched the heart of Clovis, that he turned to St. Remigius, saying, "My father, is not this the heaven you have promised me?" "Not so, my son," replied the bishop; "it is but the way thither." The king was then led to the font, and the bishop, taking up a cross, presented it to him and his nobles, that they might venerate the sacred sign of their redemption. "Great king," said Remigius,* "behold the sign of salvation: bow down your head in meekness; adore what once you burnt, and burn those idols which hitherto you have adored." Then Clovis was baptised; and it is said that at the moment when the sacred chrism was about to be applied, a white dove appeared above the font bearing in its beak a golden vessel, out of which the king was anointed. This vessel was preserved for many centuries afterwards in the cathedral, and was always used at the coronation of the kings of France.

His baptism was followed by that of three thousand of his nobles and soldiers, and the barbarous chief of the Franks became the founder of a great Christian monarchy.

* St. Remigius is often called St. Remy.

11.

THE CORONATION OF CHARLEMAGNE, A.D. 800.

a-gri-cul-ture, *the tilling of the land.*
ap-proach-ing, *drawing near.*
re-new, *to make over again.*
pa-ci-fic, *peaceable, loving peace.*
at-tempt-ed, *tried.*
con-se-crate, *to make holy, to bless.*
Christ-en-dom, *that part of the world which has received the Christian faith.*

THE Roman empire fell to pieces under the successors of Constantine. The emperors who reigned at Constantinople had no power to check the conquests of the barbarians, and they soon left the people of the West to take care of themselves. By degrees the Romans came to look on the Popes as their real rulers; for it was they alone who protected them from their enemies, and kept alive among them the last sparks of civilisation.

To St. Gregory the Great, who died in the year 604, Europe owes more than she has ever done to any other single man. Not only did he bring about the entire conversion of the English, the Lombards, and the Goths of Spain, but he spent his life in one long succession of labours for the good of his people. He revived trade and agriculture, he built schools, and collected books; he sent his embassies and letters to every state of Europe, and he struggled hard to make peace, and to console his flock in all their trials and sufferings. It is no wonder that the people of Italy showed their gratitude to these great pontiffs by giving them lands and yielding them honour, not merely as the Vicars of Christ, but also as the fittest rulers they could choose in

those wild times. All Europe looked to them as to the fathers of Christendom, and they in their turn bestowed a father's care on every country that professed the Catholic faith.

But what Europe most needed at this time was a strong hand to guide and rule her half barbarous people. In an age of almost constant war, people wanted a warlike king who could protect his subjects, but who should at the same time know how to teach them the arts of peace. We have seen how Clovis had become the founder of a Christian kingdom in the country which now began to be known by the name of France. That country was governed in the year 752 by a king named Pepin, who was a brave soldier and a faithful son of holy Church. Pope Stephen, who then filled the chair of St. Peter, had much to suffer from the attacks of the Lombards, a barbarous people who had settled in the north of Italy, and were governed by a fierce and cruel king. These people had threatened to come to Rome, and destroy every living soul within it, unless the Romans submitted to their rule. In his distress, the Pope resolved to call in the aid of King Pepin; and for this purpose he crossed the Alps, and made his way in safety to the capital of the French king.

Pepin was the most powerful king then reigning; but when he heard that the Pope was approaching, he went out to meet him, and getting off his horse, he bent low in the dust before the Vicar of Christ. Then rising, he took the Pope's horse by the bridle, and thus led him back to the city. He at once consented to march against the Lombards, and very soon drove them back to their own country, and made himself master of great part of Italy. But he did this with no thought of keeping his conquests for himself; he resolved to restore all the pro-

vinces he had conquered to the Holy See; and he caused a deed to be drawn up by which certain cities and lands were made over for ever to the Popes and their successors, as a gift and offering from him to the blessed Apostle St. Peter.

This deed was solemnly laid upon the tomb of the Apostles; and thus it was that the Popes became the real kings of those states which have since received the name of the States of the Church.

When Pepin died, the Lombards returned to their former acts of violence. But the French king had left his crown to his son Charlemagne, and to him Adrian, the successor of Pope Stephen, again applied for help.

Charlemagne entirely conquered the Lombards, and made their country submit to his own rule. He then marched on to Rome, and all the nobles and citizens came forth to meet him, and to thank him for freeing Italy from the wild and savage nation that had so long oppressed them. The youths of all nations, who flocked to Rome in order to study at her schools and colleges, came out carrying olive-branches in their hands. The clergy came too, with crosses and banners; and when Charlemagne saw them, he dismounted from his war-horse, and followed the cross on foot till he came to the foot of the steps leading to the great church of St. Peter. There Pope Adrian was waiting for him; and when Charlemagne had ascended the steps, each of which he kissed devoutly, the Pope folded him in his arms, and gave him the kiss of peace. Then the soldiers and the priests, and all the multitude of the people, joined in one song of joy, crying aloud, "Blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord;" and after this the Pope and the king entered the church hand in hand, to pour out their thanks before the tomb of the Apostle.

It was on Holy Saturday that Charlemagne entered Rome; and when the feast of Easter was over, the king renewed the grant which had been made by his father Pepin, and laid the deed upon the altar of the church.

Twenty-six years after this, Charlemagne again paid a visit to Rome. During those twenty-six years he had shown himself the greatest king who had ever reigned in Europe. He had taught his people the arts of peace, and had made them happy and prosperous. He had revived learning, and brought learned men from other countries, who set up schools in most of the cities in France. He had conquered the heathen Saxons, and caused them to embrace Christianity; and he had made many wise laws to promote justice and religion. He had now come back to Rome in order to defend the reigning Pope, St. Leo III., from the attacks of certain wicked men who had attempted to take his life; and before returning to his own country, he visited the tomb of the Apostles, where, kneeling devoutly, he gave thanks to the God of armies for all the glory and success with which his reign had been blessed. It was Christmas-day, and, according to the usual custom, the Pope was about to celebrate High Mass. But he had resolved before doing so to perform another ceremony. Rising from his throne, he moved to the altar, whereon there lay a crown sparkling with jewels, and taking this in his hand, he placed it on the head of Charlemagne, and proclaimed him Emperor.

The people who stood around caught up his words, and repeated them with cries of joy, "Long life to Charles," they cried, "whom God has crowned the great and pacific Emperor of the Romans!" Then Leo solemnly consecrated him emperor, and after this Mass was celebrated; and the news spread

through all lands that the great Roman empire been once more revived, and that Charlemagne been crowned its first emperor by the hand of Vicar of Christ.

SECTION II.

Miscellaneous Lessons.

1.

HOW TO READ WELL.

pro-nounce	par-tic-u-lar-ly	cap-it-al
ex-plan-a-tion	fright-ened	dif-fer-ent-ly
par-a-graph	slip-per-y	dis-tinct-ly

To read well, it is not enough for us to know how to spell and pronounce the words that we see before us; we must make proper *pauses* as we read, and must learn the meaning of certain marks which are used in printing. Suppose we try and explain some of these by the help of a little story. As we tell the story, we will stop every now and then to explain the way in which it is printed, and in which it ought to be read.

Once upon a time | there was a man | who thought he would go up a mountain.

This is the beginning of the story. If you look at the letters in which it is printed, you will see that they are smaller than those in the line which went before them. This is done to mark the difference between the story itself and the explanations. The straight strokes which you see between some of the words are put there to show you where to take breath as you read, so as not to spoil the sense of the sentence. Only see how badly it

would sound if you were to read the sentence thus: "Once | upon a time there | was a man who | thought he would go up a | mountain." Yet this is the way in which many children read, and it quite takes away the meaning. The first thing to be done, therefore, when we know how to pronounce all the words is, *to read them slowly, making the proper pauses.* Now we will go on with our story.

So he rode along on his horse | till he came to the foot of the mountain. | He then found | that he could ride no farther; | so he tied his horse to a tree | which he saw near him.

Then he began to walk up the mountain.

When we come to the word *him,* you see that there is no more printed on that line, but that we begin a new line just below it. The next part of the story is begun in the new line. And if you look, you will see that the first word of the new line is not printed exactly at the beginning of the line. The word "Then" is not printed so near the edge of the page as the lines above it are. There is a little space left blank; this is what is called the beginning of a *new paragraph.* One part of the story, about the man's *coming* to the mountain, is finished; and we have come now to the next part of the story, which tells about his *going up* the mountain. So we begin this new part of the story with a new *paragraph.*

Now when children come to a new paragraph, they ought not to read straight on, without any sort of pause. They should stop a little, just enough to show where one paragraph ends and the other begins. Thus those who hear them will understand by the sound of their voice, that they are coming to something fresh in the story.

Then he began | to walk up the mountain. | He scrambled on for some time, | till at last he came to a smooth path, | which was very wet and muddy. \ It soon

grew so slippery that, | in spite of all he could do, | he seemed to be sliding *down* | rather than climbing *up* | the mountain.

Here we come to the end of another paragraph. Look at the words "*up*" and "*down*." You see they are not like the other words; they are more slanting, and printed in what is called Italic. We print a word in italic when we want it to be particularly noticed. It is to be remarked, that whilst the man wanted to climb *up*, he was really sliding *down*. When you come to a word printed in this way, you must read it more distinctly than the other words.

At last | he got over the slippery part, | and came to a place | where the trees and bushes grew very thick. | He began to fear lest he should meet some wild-beast. | Presently | he looked through the bushes, | and saw among the rocks a large black thing | which he thought was a bear. | He was very much frightened, | and began to scream out as loud as he could, | "HELP! HELP! HELP!"

Observe these three last words: they are printed in *capital letters* because they are very important indeed. The man cried, "Help!" very loud.

If a word is very important, we generally print it in italics; but if it is very important indeed, we print it in capitals; and you must be careful to read such words very plainly and distinctly.

2.

HOW TO READ WELL—(*continued*).

sud-den-ly	ex-cla-ma-tion
in-ter-ro-ga-tion	sur-pris-ing
a-shamed	in-ter-est-ing

in-ter-rupt, *to break in between.*

LET us now go on with our story.

At the same time | that he shouted so loud, | he laid hold of the branch of a tree, | and soon got to the top, | out of the way of the bear. | Then he looked round him, | and

found that he could see over the bushes | to the very place | where the bear was lying. | He looked and saw——What do you think it was?

You see a straight line printed after the word "*saw.*" It is what is called a *dash.* I was going to tell you what the man saw, when I stopped suddenly, and asked you what you thought it was. The dash is put to signify this sudden stop, and you must pause a little suddenly when you come to the dash, thus: "He looked and saw—What do you think it was?"

There is also a sign after the word "*was.*" It is put to show that the last part of the sentence is to be read as if we were asking a question. It is called a *note of interrogation.* The word "*interrogation*" means a question. Now once more for the story.

He looked and saw —— | What do you think it was?—Why, | it was nothing but an *old black log!!*

The two signs at the end of this sentence are called *notes of exclamation.* They are put to show that what comes before them is surprising or uncommon. There was something strange—was there not?—in the man being so frightened, and climbing a tree to get out of the way of nothing but an *old black log.*

It is surprising; and when you read it, you must read it as if you thought it rather uncommon. "What do you think it was? Why, it was nothing but an *old black log!!*"

It was nothing but an old black log, | lying against the rocks. | The man felt quite ashamed. | He got down the tree, | and went to look at the log which had given him such a fright. | It was as black as a coal.* | And he laughed to think that he should ever have taken it for a bear.

* It had been burnt black in a fire, which some one had made there a long time before.

Do you see, after the word "*coal*," in the last line but one, a little mark like a star? It is to make you look down at the bottom of the page, where you will find another little star with something printed after it. That which is printed after the star, at the bottom of the page, is called a *note*. It is intended to explain something in the story, and it is printed there, and not in the story itself, in order not to interrupt you in reading what is more interesting. When there are more notes than one on the same page, the first note is marked with a star (*), and the second thus (†), and the *third* thus (‡), and so on.

Now we will give you the whole story, and you must read it, making the pauses for yourself, for they are not marked in printed books; and you must try to remember the explanation of the different marks which you have read in this lesson.

"Once upon a time there was a man who thought he would go up a mountain. So he rode along on his horse till he came to the foot of the mountain. He then found that he could go no farther; so he tied his horse to the foot of a tree which he saw near him.

"He then began to walk up the mountain. He scrambled on for some time till at last he came to a smooth path, which was very wet and muddy. It soon grew so slippery that, in spite of all he could do, he seemed to be sliding *down* rather than climbing *up* the mountain.

"At last he got over this slippery part, and came to a place where the trees and bushes grew very thick. He began to fear lest he should meet some wild-beast. Presently he looked through the bushes, and saw among the rocks a large black thing which he thought was a bear. He was very much fright-

ıed, and began to scream out as loud as he could, HELP! HELP! HELP!'

"At the same time that he shouted so loud, he id hold of the branches of a tree, and soon got to ıe top, out of the way of the bear. Then he ›oked round him, and found that he could see ver the bushes to the very place where the bear as lying. He looked, and saw——What do you ıink it was? Why, it was nothing but an old black g!!

"It was nothing but an old black log lying among .e bushes. The man felt quite ashamed. He got ›wn the tree, and went to look at the log which ıd given him such a fright. It was as black as a ıal.* And he laughed to think he could ever have ken it for a bear."

3.

FLOWERS AND THEIR SHAPES.

var-i-ous, *different.*
cru-ci-form, *shaped like a cross.*
prop-er-ty, *what belongs to any thing.*
com-pound, *made up of many.*
mi-cro-scope, *an instrument which makes little things look larger.*

VERY one is fond of flowers. Whether growing ld in the hedges, or in the borders of our own ttage gardens, they always please our eyes; and ring would scarcely seem like spring, if it did not ing us back the primroses and the violets.

Flowers differ one from another in many ways; ey are of various shapes and colours; whilst some e large and of brilliant hues, others are so small

* It had been burnt black in a fire, which some one had ıde there a long time before.

that we can scarcely see them as they lie hidden among the grass. Some, again, have a sweet and powerful odour; but though this is not the case with all, few flowers, comparatively speaking, have a positively disagreeable smell; for in God's works those things which are beautiful and delightful are by far the most common.

Some flowers are shaped like stars, and we call them *asters*, or *star-flowers*;* others are shaped something like butterflies, such as the blossom of the pea and the bean. Some hang down like little bells, as the blue-bells which grow so thickly in the woods in the early summer; and some have four delicate leaves shaped like a cross, and these we call *cruciform*, or cross-shaped flowers. It is said that no plant which bears a cruciform flower has ever been found, the juice or fruit of which is poisonous; and what is more, that most of them have some healing property which makes them valuable. Mustard, water-cresses, turnips, cabbages, and many other useful vegetables, have all *cruciform* flowers.

Again, there are flowers shaped like a cup; and it is from this that the bright yellow buttercup takes its name. These flowers generally grow, not quite upright, but leaning their blossoms a little on one side. If it were not for this, the rain would settle in their deep cups and spoil them; but from the position in which they are placed, the water runs out of the flower-cups, which are soon dried again in the sun. The blossom of the snapdragon is shaped just like the head of a strange animal. If you squeeze it sideways, you can make it open like a huge mouth, and just at the opening there are little white points that look like the dragon's teeth. Then, if you let it go, the mouth snaps together again; and this is what gives the flower its name.

* From *aster*, the Greek word for a star.

There are other flowers which are called *compound*, because each flower is in reality made up of a great many little flowers. The dandelion, the clover, and the daisy belong to this class.

Each blossom of a compound flower has a great number of flowers in it; these you can easily pick apart, and each looks beautiful if you see it through a microscope. Some of these compound flowers contain as many as six hundred little flowers within them.

The flowers that grow on most of our common trees are not so brilliant in colour as those of smaller plants. They are generally a light green; and I daresay many persons never notice that trees like the ash, or the oak, or the willow, have any flowers at all. You may often have seen the blossoms of some trees without knowing what they were. For instance, there is the flower of the willow, which comes out before the leaves appear in very early spring. In some parts of the country, people call it *palm*. The reason of this is, that on Palm Sunday it is the custom in the Catholic Church to bless branches of trees, and to carry them in procession. We do so in remembrance that on that day our Lord entered Jerusalem in triumph, and that the people went before Him singing praises, and carrying branches which they cut down, and strewed in the way before Him. In countries where palm-trees grow, the branches which are blessed on this day are *real* palm-branches. But as there are no palms in England, we use any branches which we can find that have leaves or blossoms on them; and at that time of the year it often happens that the willow is the only tree which has yet budded. It is, therefore, more commonly used than any other, and hence we sometimes call it *palm*.

The blossoms of the willow are not like any of

those we have been describing. They hang down like bunches of tassels, and in each tassel there are a great number of flowers growing together. It would be impossible to describe all the variety of form and colour which God has given to these beautiful objects of creation.

Besides those of which we have spoken, there are others the form of which is more uncommon. There is a flower which grows wild in many parts of England called the bee-orchis, which is so exactly like a bee, that if you did not know what it was, you would be afraid to touch it, lest it should sting. Then there is a whole class of plants whose flowers are shaped like shoes or slippers, and others which are exactly like a trumpet. But there is one flower of which the form is more singular and beautiful than any of these; it is that of a creeper which many of you have often seen, and which is commonly called the Passion-flower. It has received this name from the fact that you may see within it a likeness to every one of the instruments of our Lord's Passion. In the centre there rises a sort of pillar, which reminds us of that to which He was bound when He was scourged, and which may also represent His cross. The tendrils of the plant are just like twisted cords, figuring the whips which tore His sacred flesh, and the cords with which He was bound. Coming out from the centre of the flower we see something which has the shape of a hammer, and three straight stems with a kind of knot at their further end, which look like nails. Round the centre is a circle of purple fringe, the form of which is like that of the glory which we commonly see painted around the head of our Lord; and which reminds us also of His crown of thorns: and the green leaves are long and pointed, exactly the shape of a spear's head, like that *which pierced* His side after death. The colour of

is beautiful flower is white and blue, and it re-
ains open just three days, and then dies, which
ay remind us of the three days during which we
lebrate the mysteries of our Saviour's Passion.

From what we have said, it will be seen that
ere is great variety in the shapes of flowers, as
ell as great beauty. This variety, indeed, is one
rt of their beauty. Flowers and plants would
ve been quite as useful if they had all had one
ape and one colour. But they would not have
en so pleasing to the eye, and we cannot help
eing that God has formed them as they are for
r pleasure as well as for His own greater glory.
hen we feel the pleasure which these things cause
, let us lift our thoughts and our hearts to Him
ho gave it, and who has thus clothed the fields and
dgerows with beauty for the enjoyment of the
eatures whom He loves so much.

4.

THE HISTORY OF A DROP OF RAIN.

sur-face, *that which lies on the top, or outside.*
parched, *dried up.*
un-in-hab-it-ed, *not lived in.*
riv-u-let, *a small stream.*
at-mo-sphere, *the air we breathe.*
in-vis-i-ble, *that which we cannot see.*
cir-cu-la-tion, *flowing round, and coming back where it was before.*

HERE does the rain come from? This seems a
ry simple question, and a great many will be ready
answer it at once by saying that it comes from
e clouds. It is an answer, however, which does
t quite satisfy us. For how did the water get
to the *clouds,* and what are those gray and white

masses which we call clouds, and which we s
ing in the blue sky above us, and looking a
drops of rain as possible? These questior
first be answered before we can get at the r
tory of a drop of rain.

If the rain comes from the clouds, it is cle
the clouds must be made of water. And so th
though they are not made of water in the same
in which we see it in a drop of rain. Water i
to take three forms: it can be *liquid*, as it is
we drink it, or see it in a pond or a river; it
be *solid*, as it is when frozen into ice; and v
heated to a certain degree, it takes the form of *st*
or *vapour*. The steam which we see pouring ou
the spout of a kettle is nothing more than the wa
which was inside the kettle, turned into vapour
the heat of the fire. The clouds are water i
state of vapour. But of course the vapour m
once have existed in a liquid state, so that if
want to know where the rain comes from, we m
first find out where the vapour comes from, of wh
the clouds are made.

That vapour all came from the sea. By far
larger portion of the earth's surface is covered
the sea, and perhaps at first sight it may seem
though there was a great deal of room wasted
the world by this being so. People cannot live
the sea, and they cannot drink sea-water. Wh
therefore, it may be asked, can be the use of
this vast expanse of uninhabited ocean? But
should never think of any thing in nature witho
bearing in mind that it is the work of God, a
that whatever He has made has been made in w
dom. This is not the less true in cases where
cannot understand the use or meaning of the thir
we see. The fault is not in God's work, but in o
understanding, which is very small and imperfe

With regard, however, to the ocean, it will not be difficult to explain one at least of its many uses, and to show you that without all this water the earth on which we live would be nothing but a parched and barren desert.

Every drop of water which we drink, or which renders the soil fertile, came in the first instance from the ocean. Whether it falls on the earth in the shape of dew or rain, whether it gushes out of the ground in clear crystal springs, or flows along in streams and rivers, it came first of all from the great salt ocean, and to that same ocean the greater portion of it will sooner or later return. The ocean is the great source from which supplies of water are continually being drawn to refresh the dry land. This is done by what is called *evaporation*, a word which means simply, *the turning of water into vapour by means of heat.*

Water need not be made very hot, in order to send off some portion of itself in the shape of vapour. Great heat only makes the change go on faster. But the warmth of the sun, even on a winter's day, is quite enough to produce evaporation. Even on a cold day in winter, ponds, rivers, seas, and all moist bodies, pour off a certain quantity of steam or vapour into the air. You will therefore easily understand how it is that the warm rays of the sun, as they fall on the broad surface of the ocean, are constantly changing large quantities of the water into vapour. This vapour, when first it rises from the sea, is *invisible*, that is to say, we cannot see it as we see the steam which pours out of the spout of the kettle. But as it cools it becomes visible in the form of mist or clouds; and as the air gets still cooler these clouds return to their former state of water, and fall to the earth in drops of rain. If the air happens to be very cold indeed when the rain-

drops fall, they freeze, and reach the earth in the shape of snow or hail.

Having, then, explained where the rain comes from, we must add a few words to show what becomes of it when it has once fallen. Rain does not lie on the surface of the earth like a pond. Some of it soaks into the soil, and makes it rich and fertile, nourishing the roots of plants, and feeding their stems with juice or sap. A great deal of rain falls on the tops of mountains, and runs down their sides in the form of rivulets. When many of these unite together, they swell into rivers, which flow through valleys and plains, watering the lands through which they pass, till at last their waters once more find their way back into the ocean. Sometimes the rain, after sinking into the earth, reaches a layer of clay or hard rock through which it cannot sink any farther. It thus rests in a sort of underground basin, from whence it gushes forth again in the form of springs, when it finds some outlet through which it can make its way.

But perhaps some one will say that sea-water is salt and bitter, whilst that of springs and rivers, as well as the rain which falls from the sky, has no such taste. If all the rain were in the first place drawn up out of the sea, would not it be as salt as the sea itself is? You must understand, therefore, that when water evaporates, or is changed into vapour by means of heat, it leaves behind it whatever other substance may have been before mixed with it. Mud is water mixed with earth; but when the water evaporates out of a muddy ditch, the *earth* that is mixed with it is left behind, and nothing but the pure water is sucked up into the air. When this water falls back to the earth in the shape of rain, therefore, it is as pure and tasteless as that which we should draw out of a fresh crystal well.

And it is the same with the salt sea-water; the *water* only evaporates, and the salt is left behind. This is one of the many instances of God's good providence; for were it otherwise, the rain would fall back on the earth charged with salt or other substances which would destroy vegetation, whilst the springs and rivers, which owe their origin to the rain, would be quite unfit to drink.

This constant circulation of the waters of the globe, from the sea to the clouds, from the clouds to the earth, and from the earth back again to the ocean, is the grand means by which they are kept pure and fresh, and by which a constant supply is provided for the earth at the time and in the manner which is most required.

5.

THE CLOUD AND THE SUNBEAM.

A FABLE.

I SAW while gazing on the sky,
A lazy cloud go sailing by;
Just then a sunbeam ran to meet him,
And thus, in merry strain, did greet him,
"Good morrow, friend; but tell me, pray,
Where have you been so long away?
In vain I've sought you, I protest,
From north to south, from east to west;
I thought you'd died from want of breath,
Or else had wept yourself to death."

The sunbeam was a joyous creature;
The cloud was dark and stern of feature,
And, as his oldest friends confess'd,
A *dull* companion at the best.

I thought he never look'd so gay
As when the sunbeam pass'd that way.
The cloud replied in sullen mood,
And talk'd of "man's ingratitude;"
"Look at that waving golden sea
Of ripen'd corn, and think of me;
Who gave through each advancing hour,
The early and the later shower?
Both night and day I labour'd hard,
And what, think you, was my reward?
'T would draw e'en tears from stones to say—
Man grumbled, wished me far away;
And yet I rais'd that crop you'll own,
And thanks are due to me alone."

"Well, on my word!" his friend replied,
"My merits soon are cast aside;
Methinks, friend Cloud, you'd strive in vain,
Without my help to raise the grain.
For many an hour, as you well know,
I did my best to make it grow;
And for a month past, I may say,
I've never left it for a day:
Ask Farmer Brown, now riding by,
Who has most merit, you or I."

The farmer heard their story through,
And said, "What stupid folks be you!
With rain alone the crops don't thrive,
'Tis sunshine keeps them all alive;
But if no genial showers we get,
They're all burnt up for want of wet.
To both I look to bring me store,
So work together as before!"

6.

STORIES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY. NO. I.

ST. EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

de-scend-ant, *one descended from.*
ac-com-plish, *to bring to pass.*
to ac-know-ledge, *to confess.*
op-press, *to govern hardly, to weigh down.*

CANUTE was succeeded by his two sons; but after their death the English people grew tired of the Danish rulers, and placed on the throne a prince of the old Saxon race. He was a descendant of Alfred's, and he is known in history by the name of St. Edward the Confessor. This word *confessor* has two meanings: we use it in speaking of a priest who hears confessions; but those saints who were not martyrs are likewise called *confessors*, because during their lives they *confessed*, or bore witness to, the true religion. When St. Edward was still an infant, his mother took him to the abbey church of Ely, and laying him upon the altar, she solemnly offered him to God. As he grew up, he daily renewed this offering of himself; and at the age of forty, when he became king of England, his heart was still as pure and innocent as that of a child.

St. Edward was not possessed of such great and shining talents as Alfred; but when a man is full of the grace of God, and tries to act purely for His honour and glory, he is often able to accomplish even greater things than are done by those who trust only to their own wisdom. The good laws which he made for his people, and the tender care he took to make them happy, gained him their warmest love; and in after years, whenever the English people were oppressed by their rulers, they

would cry out for justice, saying, "Give us bac the good old laws of St. Edward the Confessor!"

One of the chief things for which this good king was remarkable was his great love of the poor. He often washed their feet, and did other lowly offices for them, in imitation of the humility of our Divine Lord. And his alms were so large, that people used to say that the king's treasures belonged much more to the beggars in his streets than they did to himself. One day, as the king's chamberlain, whose name was Hugolin, was coming out of the palace, he found a poor beggar lying at the gate, who cried out to him, and begged him to take compassion on him. This poor man was dreadfully deformed; he had lost the use of both his legs, and could only drag himself along the ground by means of his arms.

"What can I do for you?" said Hugolin, as he gazed with pity at the miserable being before him. "I will tell you," said the beggar, "and I beg you to mark my words. I have six times gone on pilgrimage to the tomb of the holy Apostles at Rome, and have humbly prayed St. Peter, the great prince of the Apostles, to obtain for me from God the restoration of my health. My prayer has not as yet been granted; but the blessed Apostle has himself assured me that my cure will be wrought by the hands of our holy King Edward. He has, therefore, commanded me to declare to the king that if he will take me in his arms and carry me from his palace-gates to the altar of the abbey church at Westminster, health and strength shall return to these crippled limbs."

Hugolin at first laughed at the beggar's words, it seemed to him that no man in his senses would dare to ask so great a favour of the King of England. But the poor man begged him so earnestly

to deliver his message, that he could refuse him no longer, and going to St. Edward, he told him all that had passed. The good king at once hastened to the gate, giving humble thanks to God that He had chosen him for this service; and when he saw the miserable beggar, he stooped down and gently raised him on his shoulders. The nobles who stood by were angry at what they thought the insolence of the beggar and the folly of the king. Edward, however, did not listen to their murmurs, but went on carrying his burden till he reached the high altar of Westminster Abbey. Then he laid the poor man gently on the altar-step; and as he did so, every one saw that the diseased limbs had recovered strength, and that the cripple was perfectly cured. They gave loud thanks to God and St. Peter, and acknowledged that the faith and humility of the king had received their reward. But Edward made haste out of the church, for it pained him to hear his own praises; and calling the beggar to him, he gave him money for his journey, and bade him hasten back to Rome, to offer his thanksgiving at the tomb of the Apostles.

7.

TRAVELLER'S WONDERS.

quad-ru-ped, *a four-footed beast.*
un-pal-at-a-ble, *disagreeable to the taste.*
in-gre-di-ents, *the parts of which a thing is made.*
per-ni-ci-ous, *hurtful.*

ONE winter's evening, as Captain Compass was sitting by the fireside with his children all around him, little Jack said to him, "Papa, pray tell us some stories about what you have seen in your voyages."

"To be sure," said the captain, "I have seen

a great variety of people, and their different ı ners and ways of living; and if it will be any en tainment to you, I will tell you some curious pa culars of what I observed."

"Pray do, papa," cried Jack and all his broth and sisters; so they drew close round him, and began as follows:

"Well, then, I was once, about this time of th year, in a country where it was very cold, and the poor inhabitants had much ado to keep themselves from starving. They were clad partly in the skins of beasts made smooth and soft by a particular art, but chiefly in garments made from the outward covering of a middle-sized quadruped, which they were so cruel as to strip off his back while he was alive. They dwelt in habitations, part of which was sunk underground. The materials were either stones, or earth hardened by fire; and so violent in that country were the storms of wind and rain, that many of them covered their roofs all over with stones. The walls of their houses had holes to let in the light; but to prevent the cold air and wet from coming in, they were covered by a sort of transparent stone made of melted sand or flints. As wood was rather scarce, I know not what they would have done for firing, had they not discovered in the bowels of the earth a very extraordinary kind of stone, which, when put among burning wood, caught fire and flamed like a torch."

"Dear me," said Jack, "what a wonderful stone! I suppose it was somewhat like what we call firestones, that shine so when we rub them together." "I don't think they would burn," replied the captain; "besides, these are of a darker colour.

"Well, but their diet too was remarkable. Some of them ate fish that had been hung up in the

smoke till they were quite dry and hard; and along with it they ate either the roots of plants, or a sort of coarse black cake made of powdered seeds. These were the poorer class; the richer had a whiter kind of cake, which they were fond of daubing over with a greasy matter that was the product of a large animal among them. This grease they used too in almost all their dishes, and when fresh it really was not unpalatable. They likewise devoured the flesh of many birds and beasts, when they could get it; and ate the leaves and other parts of a variety of vegetables growing in the country, some absolutely raw, others variously prepared by the aid of fire. Another great article of food was the curd of milk, pressed into a hard mass and salted. This had so rank a smell, that persons of weak stomachs often could not bear to come near it. For drink, they made great use of the water in which certain dry leaves had been steeped. These leaves, I was told, came from a great distance. But what astonished me most was their use of a liquor so excessively fiery and pungent that it seemed like liquid fire. I once got a mouthful of it by mistake, taking it for water, which it resembles in appearance; but I thought it would instantly have taken away my breath. Indeed, people are not unfrequently killed by it; and yet many of them will swallow it greedily whenever they can get it. The strangest custom that I believe prevails in any nation I found here, which was, that some take a mighty pleasure in filling their mouths full of stinking smoke; and others, in thrusting a nasty powder up their nostrils."

"I should think it would choke them," said Jack. "It almost did me," answered his father, "only to stand by while they did it; but use, it is truly said, is second nature.

"I was glad enough to leave this cold climate;

and about half a year after, I fell in with a people enjoying a delicious temperature of air, and a country full of beauty and verdure. The trees and shrubs were furnished with a great variety of fruits, which, with other vegetable products, constituted a large part of the food of the inhabitants. I particularly relished certain berries growing in bunches, some white and some red, of a very pleasant sourish taste, and so transparent, that one might see the seeds at their very centre. Here were whole fields full of flowers, which they told me were succeeded by pods bearing seeds, that afforded good nourishment to man and beast. The people were tolerably gentle and civilised, and possessed many of the arts of life. Their dress was very various. Many were clad only in a thin cloth made of the long fibres of the stalk of a plant, cultivated for the purpose, which they prepared by soaking in water, and then beating with large mallets. Others wore cloth woven from a sort of vegetable wool, growing in pods upon bushes. But the most singular material was a fine glossy stuff, used chiefly by the richer classes, which, as I was credibly informed, is manufactured out of the webs of caterpillars. This people are very fantastic in their dress, especially the women, whose apparel consists of a great number of articles impossible to be described, and strangely disguising the natural form of the body. One thing surprised me much, which was, that they bring up in their houses an animal of the tiger kind, with formidable teeth and claws, which, notwithstanding its natural ferocity, is played with and caressed by the most timid and delicate of their women."

"I am sure I would not play with it," said Jack. "Why you might chance to get an ugly scratch if you did," said the captain.

"The language of this nation seems very harsh

to a foreigner, yet they converse among one another with great ease and quickness. One of the oddest customs is that which men use on saluting each other. Let the weather be what it will, they uncover their heads, and remain uncovered for some time, if they mean to be extraordinarily respectful."

"Why that's like pulling off our hats," said Jack. "Ah, ah, papa!" cried Betsy; "I have found you out. You have been telling us of our own country, and what is done at home, all this while!" "But," said Jack, "we don't burn stones, or eat grease and powdered seeds, or wear skins and caterpillars' webs, or play with tigers." "No?" said the captain; "pray what are coals but stones? and is not butter, grease; and corn, seeds; and leather, skins; and silk, the web of a kind of caterpillar? And may we not as well call a cat an animal of the tiger kind, as a tiger an animal of the cat kind? So, if you recollect what I have been describing, you will find, with Betsy's help, that all the other wonderful things I have told you of are matters familiar among ourselves. But I meant to show you, that a foreigner might easily represent every thing as equally strange and wonderful among us, as we could do with respect to his country; and also to make you sensible that we daily call a great many things by their names without ever inquiring into their nature and properties; so that, in reality, it is only their names, and not the things themselves, with which we are acquainted."

8.

THE WINTER'S NIGHT.

AROUND the fire, one wintry night,
  The farmer's rosy children sat,
The fagot lent its blazing light,
  And jokes went round and careless chat.
When, hark! a gentle hand they hear
  Low tapping at the bolted door;
And, thus to gain their willing ear,
  A feeble voice was heard t' implore:

"Cold blows the blast across the moor,
  The sleet drives hissing in the wind,
Yon toilsome mountain lies before,
  A dreary treeless waste behind.
Open your hospitable door,
  And shield me from the biting blast;
Cold, cold it blows across the moor,
  The weary moor that I have pass'd!"

With hasty steps the farmer ran,
  And close beside the fire they place
The poor half-frozen beggar-man,
  With shaking limbs and pallid face.
The little children flocking came,
  And warm'd his stiffened hands in theirs;
And busily the good old dame
  A comfortable mess prepares.

Their kindness cheer'd his drooping soul;
  And slowly down his wrinkled cheek
The big round tear was seen to roll,
  That told the thanks he could not speak.
The children too began to sigh
  And all their merry chat was o'er;
And yet they felt, they knew not why,
  More glad than they had been before.

9.

LESSONS IN GEOGRAPHY. NO. I.

MOUNTAINS.

lof-ty, *high.*
bar-ri-er, *a wall or division.*
in-de-pen-dent, *not relying upon another.*

PERHAPS there is not in the whole world a grander sight than that of a lofty chain of mountains. Those who have lived all their lives in a flat country can hardly imagine what it is to see hills rising one above another, their tops glittering with snow, or lost among the clouds. It is a sight which, like that of the great ocean, always lifts our thoughts to God; so that we are ready to exclaim with the royal Psalmist, "O Lord, Thy justice is like the mountains, and Thy judgments are like the great deep!"

And yet even the highest mountains are a mere nothing when we compare them with the enormous globe on which they stand. The loftiest mountain which is known is only about six miles high; whereas, if you could pass a line right through the centre of the globe, it would measure from one end to another not less than 8000 miles. Compared, however, with the eye that beholds them, mountains are truly great and magnificent objects, and, like all the works of God, they are useful as well as beautiful.

In the first place, it is from mountains that all those streams and rivers take their source which water the earth and make it fertile. The snow which gathers on the tops of the highest hills, and melts under the heat of the summer sun, and the rain which falls on their sloping sides, feed brooks and torrents, which afterwards unite their waters and

swell into mighty rivers. If there were no mountains, there would be neither springs, nor fountains, nor rivers, nor lakes. Moreover, mountains have a great effect upon the climate of a country. Sometimes they protect it, like a great wall, from cold and piercing winds; and many delicate and valuable plants grow in their sheltered valleys, which could not live if exposed to a bleaker atmosphere. Then from the way in which they are heaved up above the surface of the earth, men are able to dig out of their sides the mineral treasures which they contain, with much greater ease than if they had to sink their mines down into the heart of the earth. We generally find that mountainous countries are very rich in minerals. The iron-mines of Sweden, and the gold and silver mines of South America, are all found in the mountains of those countries; whilst our own Welsh hills furnish us abundantly with lead and copper.

Again, mountains are a sort of natural barrier between different nations, and in times of war and invasion they serve as walls and castles for defence. Thus, when the Saxons invaded Britain, it was to the mountains of Wales that the Britons fled for refuge. And we always find that the people of a mountainous country, such as Switzerland, or the Scottish Highlands, or the Tyrol, are a brave and independent race, ready at all times to beat off a foreign invader.

Mountains are not all alike in appearance. If they are very lofty, their tops are covered with snow, because the air is always colder the farther we get from the earth's surface. The snow therefore gathers on the summits of these mountains in great heaps, which sometimes fall in one great mass into the valleys below, burying fields and flocks and houses. This is what is called an *avalanche;* and in

Switzerland, as we have seen in a former lesson, persons often lose their lives by these terrible accidents. The highest snow-mountain of Switzerland is called Mont Blanc, or the *white mountain;* and of late years many bold men have succeeded in climbing to its very top.

There is another kind of mountain called a *volcano,* which simply means a *fire-mountain.* In these mountains there are great rents and holes, which constantly pour out fire and smoke and melted rock, or *lava.* At times the fire bursts out with such fury that the streams of lava pour down the sides, destroying every thing in their course, and burying whole towns and villages. Mount Vesuvius, near Naples, in Italy, Mount Etna in Sicily, and Mount Hecla in the island of Iceland, are all of them volcanoes; and there are a great number of others in the lofty mountains of Asia and South America.

Mountains are generally found lying in long ranges, from which other smaller ranges branch off in different directions; just as the smaller boughs of a great tree branch off from the trunk. The long ranges are called *mountain-chains,* and sometimes extend for many hundred miles. If you look at the map of America, you will see that one long chain of hills runs through that continent from north to south. It is called by different names; the portion which belongs to North America bearing the name of the Rocky Mountains, whilst that in the South is called the Chain of the Andes; but in reality they are nothing more than one unbroken chain, which is probably the largest that exists in the whole world.

10.

THE HABITS OF FLOWERS.

ap-proach, *to come near.*
reg-u-lar, *according to rule.*
ap-point-ed, *that which is ruled, or ordered.*
fra-grance, *a sweet smell.*

FLOWERS, like men and women, have their habits, or ways of acting; and the habits of all flowers are not alike. There are some, like the evening primrose, which remain shut up during the day, and only open after sunset. Others close their leaves at night, and open again in the morning. Tulips do this; and they close so quickly as the evening draws in, that it sometimes happens that bees and other insects are shut up within their leaves, and kept prisoners all the night. If you were to rise very early some morning and go out into the meadows, you would scarcely see a single daisy in the fields which yesterday were spangled all over with their silver blossoms. But wait till the sun has risen, and the little flowers will open their leaves and sparkle as brightly as before. In fact, this flower is called the daisy, or *day's eye*, because it opens its eye at the dawn of day.

Again, the dandelion closes its blossoms so tightly every evening, that if you looked at them, you would think they were buds which had not yet blossomed. Nor is this all; for when the sun is very hot, this flower will close in the same way to protect itself from the burning heat. Other flowers really seem to sleep at night. They not only close their leaves, but hang down their heads as though nodding in their sleep. But when morning dawns they appear to wake, lifting their heads and opening their blossoms as though to welcome back the sunlight.

Most of you know the beautiful little flower which is called the shepherd's weather-clock. It is shaped like a star, of a brilliant scarlet, with a delicate centre of rich purple. This flower closes at the approach of wet weather, and even on a bright, sunshiny day seems to feel something in the atmosphere which foretells a change. And again there are other flowers which only bloom during the night. There is one habit which we find, however, in almost every flower, and that is a love of light. Flowers turn naturally towards the light, as though they loved it. If you put a pot of flowers in your window, they will all bend their heads towards the light; and if you change the position of the pots, it will not be long before the flowers also change their position.

Through the spring, summer, and autumn, we have a regular succession of flowers, which come one after the other. Each has its own season, and opens every year at its own appointed time. The flowers of spring are small and delicate, but generally sweet smelling. Those of autumn, on the contrary, are large and brilliant in colour, like the dahlia and the china-aster; but they seldom have much fragrance. If you ask what it is which gives different colour and fragrance to different flowers, we must simply answer that we do not know. There are many things which men, with all their science, cannot explain, and this is one of them. We know, indeed, that it is from the sap inside the stem of the plant that the flower-buds are formed; but we do not know why one is yellow and another red. The sap in a yellow rose-tree is just the same to look at as that in a red rose-tree. The stems of both are green, and at first the buds are green also. But when the flowers blow, the air and the light give them different colours; and what is more wonderful *still, different* colours will be found, as it

were, painted upon parts of the same flower. T tulips are streaked with red and white and yell the heart's-ease has three colours in it, so that it sometimes called the tricoloured violet; one lily spotted like the skin of a tiger; and there is a pa ticular kind of poppy the leaves of which are quit white, except just at the edge, where they are red as though they had been lightly dipped in crimson dye.

Now how it is that the sap should make these different colours in the same flower, we do not know. Neither can we tell how one colour is made to shade off into another. This is so nicely done that you cannot say where one colour begins and another ends. The apple-blossom is crimson and white; but if you look at it, you cannot point out the spot where the white colour begins to run off into the red.

As to the fragrance of flowers, we know just as little of its cause. Most flowers have some kind of fragrance; but it very often happens that those which are most brilliant in colour have not the sweetest smell. There are some flowers which have a bad smell; but these are very few when compared to the thousands in the fields and hedges which delight us by their odour. You will scarcely find sweeter flowers than the clover which covers our meadows, the primroses and violets which blossom on every bank, the honeysuckle which twines among the briers, the meadow-sweet which lifts its starry blossoms by the side of almost every stream. What a lesson there is in this! These humble, sweet-smelling flowers are like pictures of what we should try to be,—contented with a lowly and common lot, and shedding abroad the sweet odour of kindness nd charity over all who live around us.

11.

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS.

THERE is a Reaper, whose name is Death,
And with his sickle keen
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

"Shall I have naught that is fair?" saith he;
"Have naught but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
I will give them all back again."

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves:
It was for the Lord of Paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

"My Lord has need of these flowerets gay,"
The Reaper said, and smiled;
"Dear tokens of the earth are they,
Where He was once a child.

They shall all bloom in fields of light,
Transplanted by my care;
And saints, upon their garments white,
These sacred blossoms wear."

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,
The flowers she most did love;
She knew she should find them all again
In the fields of light above.

Oh, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away.

DESCRIPTIVE GEOGRAPHY. NO. I.

THE BRITISH ISLES.

sig-ni-fy, *to mean.*
grad-u-al-ly, *by degrees.*
ded-i-cate, *to devote or consecrate.*
con-sid-er, *to think.*

THE British Isles lie to the north-west of Europe, and consist of the large island of Great Britain, with Ireland, and several smaller islands. The northern part of Great Britain is called Scotland, and the southern part England: they were formerly separate kingdoms, but for the last two hundred years they have been governed by the same sovereigns, and are now united, so as to form one country.

The north and west of Scotland are full of high mountains, and open waste lands, called moors. The climate is much colder than in England, and in many parts of Scotland no wheat will grow, and the people eat oat-cakes instead of bread. In the north they live mostly upon fish, of which they catch great quantities; and the season when the herrings come to their shores in vast shoals is looked on as a sort of harvest-time. In the south of Scotland the mountains are not so high, and a great number of sheep are fed upon the hills. The Scotch make a great deal of warm clothing from the wool of their sheep; and many of the woollen stuffs and shawls used in England come from Glasgow, Paisley, and other manufacturing towns.

Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland; it stands on three hills, and is thought to be one of the most beautiful cities in the world. The royal palace, where the Kings of Scotland used to live, was dedicated in Catholic times to the Holy Cross,

and is still called Holyrood, because the word 'rood' signifies the same as the cross.

The country in the north of England is something like that in the southern part of Scotland; it is full of high hills and open moors, and among the hills lie several beautiful lakes. All the west of England is likewise more or less hilly, and that part which is called Wales is full of high mountains. From this high ground lying to the west the land slopes gradually to the sea, and the eastern coast is for the most part low, flat, and marshy. Most of the rivers which rise in the western and midland districts flow to the east, and fall into the German Ocean; among these are the Tyne, the Tees, the Humber, the Ouse, and the Thames. A few other rivers, rising on the western slopes of the same hills, flow from east to west, and fall into the Irish Channel, such as the Mersey; while the Severn and the Wye, rising in the mountains of Wales, are forced to flow directly south, through the broad valleys which lie between the hilly ranges.

These numerous and beautiful rivers make England a rich and fertile country, and at the same time supply her with plenty of excellent ports and harbours. The broad mouth of the Thames, on which stands London, is covered with the shipping of all nations. At the mouth of the Severn stands the busy port of Bristol; and Liverpool, at the mouth of the Mersey, is now considered the second seaport in the kingdom.

In the hilly country of the north of England is to be found the largest coal-district that exists in any land. The town of Newcastle stands upon a bed of coal; and from the ports of Tynemouth and Newhaven immense fleets of coasting vessels carry the coals to every part of England.

In Yorkshire the beautiful streams which flow

from the hills meet and form one large and noble stream, to which we give the name of the Humber. In old times all the country north of this stream was called North-Humber-Land, a name now given to only one county. It was on the banks of these Yorkshire rivers, and specially on the Trent, that the people crowded to receive baptism from St. Paulinus, the apostle of the north of England, and the first archbishop of York.

Large cloth-manufactories are now established at Leeds, Huddersfield, and other towns in Yorkshire; Hull, at the mouth of the Humber, being the chief seaport of the Yorkshire trade. The *cotton* manufactures of England are mostly situated at Manchester, in Lancashire, the cotton being brought from America, with which country the town of Liverpool carries on a great trade.

In the midland counties of England a great deal of iron and coal are found, and the air is darkened with the smoke of furnaces and forges in which the metal is melted and prepared. If you travel by night through this district, you will see the sky lit up by the flames from the burning furnaces: the earth is quite black, and the whole scene is gloomy and desolate. The chief *iron-works* of England are in the neighbourhood of Birmingham and Wolverhampton.

Very different from the busy manufacturing districts of which we have just spoken are those beautiful counties which lie to the west. Among the wooded hills of Herefordshire and Worcestershire lie rich hop-gardens and blossoming orchards, where great quantities of perry and cider are made from the pears and apples. The whole of Wales, but particularly its northern counties, is very mountainous; and from the top of its highest mountain, which is called Snowdon, you may on a clear day

see the hills of Ireland, Scotland, and Cumberland. These Welsh mountains are full of mines of coal, lead, and copper. The Welsh people do not belong to the same race as the inhabitants of England. They are descended from the Britons, who fled to these mountains at the time when the fierce tribes of the Anglo-Saxons conquered that part of the island which from them has received the name of Angle-land, or England. The Welsh still speak the ancient British language, and both in appearance and character are very different from the English. In the north of Wales is Holywell, so called from a miraculous fountain which sprang forth from the spot where St. Winifred was put to death. This well is still a place of pilgrimage, and many cures have been wrought there even in our own days. The well pours forth an immense quantity of water, which never freezes even in the coldest weather; and hanging round it you may see the sticks and crutches of those pilgrims who have left them there as tokens of their cure.

13.

THE BRITISH ISLES—(*continued*).

un-in-hab-it-ed, *not lived in.*
cath-e-dral, *a church where a bishop has his chair.*
sub-urbs, *parts that lie outside the walls of a city.*
ag-ri-cul-tu-ral, *cultivated.*
ar-se-nal, *a place where arms and warlike stores are kept.*
u-ni-ver-si-ty, *a place of general education.*

On the eastern coast of England, between the mouths of the Humber and the Ouse, lies a low district covered with fens or marshes. These were once dreary and uninhabited wastes, but are now by dint of labour rendered rich and productive. When

well drained, they form the best pastures for cattle in the kingdom; and in those parts where the marshes still remain, immense flocks of geese are reared, whose quills and feathers form a valuable article of trade.

The only objects of any beauty to be seen in this district are the old churches and cathedrals. In former times these fen countries formed the favourite retreat of the monks, who raised the noble abbeys of Croyland, Ely, and Peterborough, the last of which was called the Rome of the north, because, like Rome, it was considered as the chosen city of St. Peter.

Norfolk and Suffolk formed the old Anglo-Saxon kingdom of East Anglia, one of whose kings, called Edmund, was martyred by the Danes, and gave his name to the town of St. Edmundsbury, where the great abbey formerly stood which contained his shrine. The names of these two counties mean that they were inhabited by the north-folk and the south-folk (or people) of this kingdom. The largest city is Norwich, where the good Queen Philippa established a manufactory of worsted stuffs, which still keeps up a flourishing trade.

Near the mouth of the Thames, which flows into the sea between the two counties of Kent and Essex, stands the great city of London, in size and commercial importance the first city of Europe, though inferior to most other capitals in the beauty of its buildings. It contains between two and three millions of inhabitants, and occupies a space of ground upwards of seven miles in length, and five in breadth. This great city is, however, really made up of what were once the two separate cities of London and Westminster, and the borough of Southwark, which stands on the southern bank of the Thames. The river is navigable for ships of the

largest size, and a forest of countless masts may be seen rising from the port of London.

South of the Thames extends a beautiful agricultural district, whose wooded hills and smiling valleys are broken in Wiltshire and Sussex by broad open plains or *downs*. Kent, from the richness of its soil, is called the garden of England, and its hop-gardens are scarcely less beautiful to look at than the vineyards of Southern Europe. The white chalk cliffs of the southern coast may be seen from the opposite shores of France, and have given our island the name of Albion, or the White Land. It was at Canterbury, in Kent, that St. Augustine, the apostle of England, founded his see, which long remained the first in dignity of the English Church. The cathedral of Canterbury was the scene of the martyrdom of St. Thomas à Becket, one of his successors. The stains of his blood may still be seen on the pavement: and in Catholic times his magnificent shrine was a place of pilgrimage to Christians of all nations.

Farther to the west lies Hampshire, still covered with remains of the Great Forest called the New Forest, which was formed by William the Conqueror, in order to furnish himself with hunting-grounds. On the sea-coast stands Portsmouth, with its great dockyard and naval arsenal. In Somersetshire are situated the two cities of Bath and Bristol, the former of which takes its name from the hot springs, which were known and frequented in the time of the Romans.

Devonshire and Cornwall form the south-western extremity of England. From the high ground of Dartmoor, which occupies the central part of Devonshire, flow several beautiful rivers, such as the Tamar, the Exe, the Teign, and the Dart. At the mouth of the last-named river stands Dartmouth,

the most ancient harbour in the kingdom. At Plymouth is another of the royal dockyards, and an important naval and military arsenal. The climate of this beautiful county is the mildest in England; myrtles blossom in the open air, and the shores are clothed with foliage to the water's edge. The valleys are filled with apple-orchards, which every year produce great quantities of cider. Exeter, its capital, is a city of considerable size and importance.

Cornwall extends like a long promontory into the Atlantic Ocean, its extremity forming a rocky cape called the Land's End. This county is wild and desolate in appearance, but very rich in mines of tin and lead. It is inhabited by a race descended, like the Welsh, from the ancient Britons.

England possesses two large universities, one at Oxford and the other at Cambridge. These towns are rendered beautiful from the exquisite architecture of their colleges, founded by the great Catholic princes and bishops of the middle ages. But since the Reformation, when the Catholic religion was overthrown in this country, these colleges, as well as all the cathedrals and parish-churches of England, have been given up to the use of Protestants.

There are now twelve Catholic bishoprics established in England, together with the archbishopric of Westminster. The bishops' sees are fixed in the towns of Hexham, Beverley, Liverpool, Salford, Shrewsbury, Nottingham, Northampton, Birmingham, Newport, Southwark, Clifton, and Plymouth. Catholic colleges have also been founded at Ushaw, in the county of Durham, at Oscott, near Birmingham, and in several other places.

Ireland, which lies to the west of Great Britain, is a beautiful island, but not so well cultivated as England: in some parts it is very mountainous, and in others it is covered with great bogs, where woods

and forests formerly stood, but where the soft damp earth is now covered with turf. When this turf is cut out and dried, it forms excellent fuel.

Dublin is the capital of Ireland; there are also several other fine cities, such as Belfast in the north, where there is a great linen manufactory, and Cork in the south, which is famous for its magnificent harbour.

Dublin is the seat of a large college, which, like those of Oxford and Cambridge, has since the Reformation been in the hands of Protestants. But within a few years a Catholic university has likewise been established in this city, and a Catholic college for the clergy has been founded for several years at Maynooth, in the county of Kildare. Christianity was first introduced into Ireland by St. Patrick, who is therefore honoured as the apostle and patron saint of Ireland. It is said that when preaching to the people on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, he explained this mystery of the faith by showing them the leaf of a shamrock, which is made up of three little leaves all joined in one. This is why the shamrock is always used as the badge or emblem of Ireland.

The people of Ireland have constantly preserved the faith which they learnt from St. Patrick; in the north, where colonies have been established from Scotland, there are many Protestants, but the great mass of the Irish people remain unshaken in their attachment to the Catholic faith.

14.

ANECDOTES OF DOGS.

re-sume, *to take back.*
sup-pli-cate, *to beg.*
traf-fic, *trade.*
sum-ma-ry, *what is short, quick.* A 'summary' *means an abridgment or account of a thing in a short space.*

We have already given some anecdotes of the fidelity and sagacity shown by dogs in the service of their masters. But the following stories will show that they also know very well how to use their intelligence in providing for their own necessities, and that their sagacity sometimes approaches very near to reason.

Two gentlemen in England, attended by a Newfoundland dog, were once shooting wild fowl. In getting near some reeds by the side of a river, they threw down their hats, and crept to the edge of the water, where they fired at some birds. They soon afterwards sent the dog to bring their hats, one of which was smaller than the other. After several attempts to bring them both together in his mouth, the dog at last placed the smaller hat in the larger one, pressed it down with his foot, and thus was able to bring them both at the same time.

A shoeblack, who plied his calling on one of the bridges in Paris, had a poodle-dog whose sagacity brought no small profit to his master. If the dog saw a person with well-polished boots go across the bridge, he contrived to run against the boots and soil them, having first rolled himself in the mud of the river. His master was then employed to clean them. An English gentleman, who had more than once had his boots thus disfigured by the dog, was at last induced to watch his proceedings, and thus

detected the tricks he was playing for his master's benefit. He was so much pleased with the animal's sagacity, that he purchased him at a high price, and conveyed him to London. On arriving there, he was confined to the house till he appeared perfectly satisfied with his new home and his new master. He at last, however, contrived to escape, and made his way back to Paris, where he rejoined his old master, and resumed his former occupation.

A grocer in Edinburgh had a dog which for some time amused and astonished the people in the neighbourhood. A man who went through the streets ringing a bell and selling pies, happened one day to treat this dog with a pie. The next time he heard the pieman's bell, he ran eagerly towards him, seized him by the coat, and would not suffer him to pass. The pieman, who understood what the animal wanted, showed him a penny, and pointed to his master, who stood at his door, watching what was going on. The dog immediately supplicated his master by many humble gestures and looks, and on receiving a penny he instantly carried it in his mouth to the pieman, and received his pie. This traffic between the pieman and the grocer's dog continued to be daily practised for several months.

There seems very little doubt that dogs often understand what is said to them, or in their presence. "The wisest dog I ever had," said Sir Walter Scott, "was what is called a bulldog-terrier. Camp, for that was his name, once bit the baker who was bringing bread to the family. I beat him, and explained the enormity of his offence; after which, to the last moment of his life, he never heard the least allusion to the story, in whatever voice or tone it was mentioned, without getting up and retiring into the darkest corner of the room, with great appearance of distress. Then if you said, 'The

baker was well paid,' or 'The baker was not hurt after all,' Camp came forth from his hiding-place, capered, barked, and rejoiced.

"When he was unable, towards the end of his life, to attend me when on horseback, he used to watch for my return, and the servant would tell him his master was coming down the hill, or through the moor; and although he did not use any gesture to explain his meaning, Camp was never known to mistake him, but either went out at the front to go up the hill, or at the back to get down to the moor side. He certainly had a singular knowledge of spoken language."

An American gentleman had a fine large dog, which was in the habit, in the winter season, of stretching himself out at full length on the rug before the parlour-fire. His master, on coming in and observing this, would say in a common tone, and without looking or pointing at the dog, "If Carlo knew what was expected of a well-bred dog, he would get off the rug, and not take up so much room before the fire." The dog would immediately leave the rug, and retreat to a corner of the room.

It is also unquestionable that dogs have some mode of communicating with one another. A gentleman living near St. Andrew's, in Scotland, had a very fine Newfoundland dog. About a mile off, there was a farmhouse, where a large mastiff was kept as a watch-dog; and about the same distance in another direction, there was a mill where a stanch bulldog kept guard. The dogs were all of them bold and courageous; and two of them seldom met without a fight to settle their respective dignities.

The Newfoundland dog used to go every forenoon to the baker's shop in the village, with a towel containing money in the corner, returning with the *value of the money* in bread. There were many use-

less and ill-behaved curs in the village; but generally the haughty Newfoundland treated them in that contemptuous style in which great dogs are wont to treat little ones. When the dog came back from the baker's shop, he was regularly served with his dinner.

One day, however, he returned with his coat soiled and his ears scratched, having been attacked by a large number of curs while he had charge of his towel and bread, and so could not defend himself. Instead of waiting for his dinner as usual, he laid down his charge somewhat sulkily, and marched off. It was observed that he went in a straight line to the farmer's house; and it was noticed as a remarkable fact, that the meeting between the two dogs was peaceful and not warlike. After laying their heads together, and conversing in some language which they understood, the two set off together in the direction of the mill; and having arrived there, they in brief space engaged the miller's dog as an ally.

The three champions now took the nearest road to the village, and, having reached it, scoured it in great wrath, and took summary vengeance on every cur they met. Having taken ample satisfaction for the insult that had been offered to the Newfoundland, they separated, and each went home. When any two of them met afterwards, they went to fighting as before, just as if the joint campaign had never taken place.

We will conclude these anecdotes of dogs with a short moral. Some boys, more perhaps from thoughtlessness than cruelty, amuse themselves by worrying dogs, throwing stones at them, and otherwise ill-treating them. Such conduct is very wrong; and no manly and generous boy will ever be guilty of it. Cruelty to any animal is highly to be blamed; and especially when shown to a dog, the docile and intelligent friend of man, which loves him while

living and mourns him when dead, repaying kindness with affectionate gratitude, and often showing an undeserved attachment to a worthless and ill-tempered master.

15.

THE DOG AND THE WATER-LILY.

Ouse, *a river in Norfolk.*
ped-i-gree, *descent from father and mother.*
nymphs, *here means two ladies.*
wan-ton, to, *poetically means to play about.*
meads, *a poetical word for meadows.*
Beau, *the name of the spaniel.*
chir-rup, *a whistle.*

THE noon was shady, and soft airs
  Swept Ouse's silent tide,
As, for an hour escaped from cares,
  I wandered by its side.

My spaniel, prettiest of his race,
  And high in pedigree
(Two nymphs, adorned with every grace,
  That spaniel found for me),—

Now wantoned, lost in flags and reeds;
  Now starting into sight,—
Pursued the swallow o'er the meads
  With scarce a slower flight.

It was the time when Ouse displayed
  His lilies newly blown;
Their beauties I intent surveyed,
  And one I wished my own.

With cane extended far I sought
  To steer it close to land;
But still the prize, though nearly caught,
  Escaped my eager hand.

Beau marked my unsuccessful pains
  With fixed considerate face,
And, puzzling, set his puppy brains
  To comprehend the case.

But, with a chirrup clear and strong,
  Dispersing all his dream,
I thence withdrew, and followed long
  The windings of the stream.

My ramble finished, I returned;
  Beau, trotting far before,
The floating wreath again discerned,
  And, plunging, left the shore.

I saw him, with that lily cropped,
  Impatient swim to meet
My quick approach; and soon he dropped
  The treasure at my feet.

Charmed with the sight, "The world," I cried,
  "Shall hear of this thy deed;
My dog shall mortify the pride
  Of man's superior breed.

But chief myself I will enjoin,
  Awake at duty's call,
To show a love as prompt as thine
  To Him who gives me all."

16.

BAD HABITS.

sap-ling, *a young tree.* re-press, *to check, to put down.*
ac-quire, *to gain.*

THERE is a great deal of difference between doing what is wrong once, and having a habit of doing any thing wrong. We call a thing a habit, when it

is something we have the custom of doing almost every day. Some people have a particular manner of sitting or walking, and they have got so used to it that they cannot sit or walk in any other way. Or they always use some words rather than others when they speak, or they speak or read in a particular tone or manner. All these things are what we call *habits*, and when a person has got into any habit of this kind, it is very difficult for him to get rid of it. By doing the same thing over and over again, it has become a sort of second nature to him, so that he no longer notices when he is doing it or not doing it.

It is just the same with habits which are much more dangerous. If a child tells a lie once, he offends God. But if he is not checked, and so gets into the *habit* of telling lies, he will tell them so often that he scarcely takes any notice whether he is speaking truth or falsehood. It is the same with swearing, and the use of other bad words. The first time we hear such language, it shocks us; but perhaps we go on hearing it till we get used to it, and begin to use it ourselves. At last the habit is so formed in us that we hardly open our lips without uttering some bad word, and yet, it may be, we hardly notice what we have been saying. How many times in the day, therefore, does a man offend God, who has fallen into any habit of sin! And it is difficult for him to be cured of his fault, because, as we have said, it has become like a second nature to him. This is the reason why it is so very necessary for us to resist what is bad in its first beginning, before it has taken any root in our souls, as the following story may help to show us.

There was once an old hermit who led a very holy life in the desert. A young man came to him and begged that he might come and live with him, and learn from him the way to serve God more

perfectly. The hermit consented, and the first day he took his new pupil into a little wood which grew near their dwelling. He chose out a very young oak-tree, which had only just begun to shoot up from the ground. "Pull up that little sapling by the roots," he said to the young man who followed him. He obeyed, and the young tree came up with the greatest ease. Then they went a little farther, and the hermit pointed to another tree, whose roots struck deeper, and this was not quite so easy to pull up as the first had been. The third, which had grown tall and strong, took the young man some time to tear up by the roots; and when at last his master pointed to a fourth, which was yet larger and stronger, he found that, do what he would, he was quite unable to move it. "Now, my son," said the old hermit, "mark well what you have seen. It is just the same with a man's bad habits and passions. When they are young and tender, they may easily be overcome; but if you let them strike root in your soul, no human strength is sufficient to get rid of them. If, therefore, you seek to acquire virtue, watch over the first movements of your heart, and do not wait till your passions have grown strong before you try to repress them."

It is well, however, to remember that if bad habits are easily formed, good ones also may be gained, and in the same manner. We form a habit by constantly repeating the same act over and over again; and if we take pains, we may, with God's help, acquire habits of watchfulness and habits of prayer, which will fight against our bad habits, and help us to gain the victory. Thus there have been some saints who by constant practice have become so used to the habit of raising their hearts to God as to do so without effort every time they breathed. Let us try, therefore, to accustom our-

selves to good habits, and firmly resolve to check the bad ones before they grow too strong for us to master. For if we do not master our passions, they will certainly master us; and thus we shall become the slaves and servants of sin.

17.

LESSONS IN GEOGRAPHY. NO. II.

RIVERS.

u-ni-on, *joining together.*
com-mer-ci-al, *relating to commerce or trade.*
slug-gish, *idle.*
e-nor-mous, *very large.*
nav-i-gate, *to take ships through, to sail.*
el-e-va-tion, *a height.*
at-tract-ed, *drawn to.*

We have seen that rivers are generally formed by the union of smaller streams which have their origin in mountains, or some high land. Rivers, like mountains, are at once both beautiful and useful. Sometimes they wind like a silver thread through green meadows, which they fertilise as they pass. At others they may be seen dashing from some great height, and forming what are called waterfalls, or *cascades.*

Their uses are great and various. They serve as natural roads, which lead into the heart of a country, and by which its productions can be easily conveyed to seaports, and thence to foreign lands. They have, therefore, much to do with the trade or commerce of a country, and most large cities will be found built on the banks of some river, or at its mouth. One reason why London has become the first commercial city of the world is, that by her position at the mouth of the Thames she has so large and noble a port for shipping.

The course of a river, or the direction in which

it flows, mainly depends on the situation in which it rises. If it rises on the northern slope of some mountain, its course will be to the north, unless turned out of its way by meeting with some range of high ground which forces it to take another direction. And not only the *direction*, but also the character of the stream will depend upon where it rises. Suppose a river takes its rise in some hill which inclines very steeply down to the sea, the course of that river will be straight, and its current rapid.

On the other hand, if it flows through a flat country, it will wind about, always seeking out the lowest ground, or making a channel for itself in the soft yielding soil, and flowing with a slow and sluggish course. Glance at the map of France, and observe the difference between two of the rivers of that country. See how straight is the course of the Rhone; it flows directly south from a high mountainous region, and its stream is so rapid that it has been called the "*arrowy* Rhone," because it seems to rush along with the speed of an arrow. The Seine, on the contrary, flows through a country which scarcely slopes at all to the sea, but is almost a dead flat; hence the waters of this river move very slowly and wind about in every direction, finding out the lowest ground.

Sometimes a river will present both these characters in different parts of its course: its upper course, flowing through rocks and mountains, will be rapid and full of waterfalls; but when it has reached the plains below, its lower course will be gentle and winding.

Slow rivers winding through a flat country are not the most beautiful to look at, but they are the easiest to navigate, because vessels have not so strong a current to make way against when they go up the

stream. They are generally also the deepest, and the freest from shoals and rocks. Rivers of this kind are called *navigable rivers*, and of these the Mississippi, in North America, is one of the longest. It is upwards of 2000 miles in length, and is navigable through the whole of its course. You may form some idea of the size of this great river by remembering that it is six times the entire length of England. Enormous as this seems, however, the Mississippi is not the longest river in the world.* The Amazon, in South America, rises in the mountains on the western coast, and flows in an easterly direction through the plains of Brazil. Its length is no less than 3200 miles; that is to say, it is about the same length as the continent of Europe. The flood of water which this great river pours into the Atlantic Ocean, is nearly thirteen hundred times as much as that which flows out of the mouth of the Thames. The mouth of the Amazon is thirty miles across, and its channel is more than 200 feet deep. It pours into the sea with such terrific force, that sometimes it raises a watery wall 100 feet high, and the current which it causes can be distinctly perceived 500 miles away from the land.

Rivers of course do not all flow in the same direction, and it often happens that several rivers which take their rise in the very same mountain will flow in opposite directions. If there is a chain of mountains running from east to west, one of the sloping sides of this chain will face the north, and the other the south, and the streams which flow down these slopes will therefore flow some to the north and others to the south. The Rhine, which

* The Missouri falls into the Mississippi at the city of St. Louis; and if we reckon these two rivers as forming *one stream*, their combined length will exceed that of any other river, being no less than 4500 miles.

falls into the German Ocean, and the Rhone, which falls into the Mediterranean, both take their rise in the mountains of Switzerland; whilst the Po, rising on the western slopes of another branch of these mountains, continues to flow directly towards the west, and falls into the Gulf of Venice.

The sources of the great American river Missouri, which ends in the Gulf of Mexico, and those of the Columbia, which pours into the Pacific Ocean, are only divided from one another by a narrow ridge of the Rocky Mountains scarcely a mile across.

The high ground, on either side of which the streams descend, is called the *water-shed*, and it is by no means necessary that this water-shed should always be a mountain. A very slight elevation will be enough sometimes to give different directions to different streams; thus almost all the rivers which water the vast plains of Russia flow in various directions from one central spot, and their water-shed is formed by the low range of the Waldai hills.

Some rivers, like the Ganges and the Nile, overflow their banks at certain periods. This is caused either by the heavy rains which fall in hot countries at one season of the year, or by the melting of the snows on the mountains where these rivers rise. The rich mud which they leave behind them, when their waters once more return to their proper channel, brings forth the most abundant crops. The whole fertility of Egypt may be said to depend upon the yearly overflowing of the Nile. Were it not for this great river, Egypt would be a barren sandy desert like that which stretches through the greater part of Northern Africa, where the burning soil is unwatered by a single stream. In fact, those countries which we call *deserts*, are so mainly from

the absence of rivers. The whole of Arabia is one vast desert, except just in the south where some rocky mountains rise near the sea-coast. The clouds which are attracted by these mountains send down rain, and the rivulets which are thus formed run down the mountain-sides to the plains below. The sandy plains thus become fertilised; and this part of Arabia is so rich and productive that it is called by the name of Arabia the Happy.*

18.

A COMPARISON.

to com-pare, *to liken one thing to another.*
com-par-i-son, *the likeness one thing bears to another.*
or-i-gin, *beginning.*
tur-bu-lent, *disturbed, unquiet.*
or-na-ment, *something which adorns.*

PLINY, an old Roman writer, who lived about seventy years after Christ, has made a beautiful comparison between the course of a great river, such as one of those we have described in the last lesson, and the life of man. The river, he says, springs from the earth, and yet its real origin is in heaven. Its beginnings are small enough: at first it is a tiny thing, playing among the flowers of a meadow; then it grows a little larger, and waters a garden, or, it may be, turns a mill. This may be likened to the time of childhood. But to childhood succeeds our youth. The river has gathered strength and has grown wild and impetuous. It is impatient of the restraint which it meets with in its rocky home; it is restless and turbulent, quick in its motion, and often unsteady in its course. It dashes away from

* Or *Arabia Felix*, *felix* being the Latin word for *happy*.

the hills and rocks, and flows out into the open plain. Thus youth gives place to manhood, and the man goes out into the broad world.

Then we see the river gradually losing something of its turbulence, it flows more steadily through green fields, which it renders fertile; and instead of dashing headlong against every thing which opposes its course, it yields to obstacles which it cannot overcome, and its stream becomes gentle and winding. Now it flows past great cities and the busy haunts of men; wherever it goes it renders service to man, it bears wealth on its broad waters, it enriches the soil, and is at once the support and the ornament of the country. Other rivers flow into it, and swell its tide, till at last it rolls its mighty waters into the broad ocean that awaits it. So after a busy manhood, it will be with us; every step of our course will draw us nearer and nearer the great ocean of eternity, into which we must enter at last, and, like the waters of the river when they reach the sea, be lost for ever to the eyes of man.

19.

THE LION.

pro-voked, *made angry.* mo-lest, *to hurt.*
as-pect, *look, appearance.*
rhi-no-ce-ros, *a huge animal of Africa, having a short horn on its nose.*
an-te-lope, *the name given to several kinds of deer.*
skel-e-ton, *an animal's bones without the flesh or skin.*
in-ter-fere, *to go between, to meddle with any business belonging to another person.*

THE lion is a very large animal of the cat tribe, and is the fiercest and most powerful of all the

beasts of prey. He stands about four feet from the ground, and his body is generally eight or nine feet long. His hair is a brownish yellow, and a long shaggy mane grows round his ears and neck. He has large fiery eyes, and with one stroke of his paw he is able to kill a dog. When angry, or seeking for his prey, he sends forth loud and terrible roars, which sound like thunder. Like the cat, he is able to spring a great distance, and it is in this manner that he kills his prey. Lions are found both in Asia and Africa, but the African lions are the largest and fiercest of any.

Many dreadful stories are told of men who have been carried off by these animals, but in general they will not attack a man unless first provoked. One of the most famous hunters of Africa, named Diederich Muller, had been one day out hunting in the wild plains of that country, when, as he rode home, he came suddenly on a lion. He got off his horse, and, holding his bridle on his arm, he fired his gun at the lion. Just as he did so his horse started, and pulling his arm aside the gun missed its aim. The lion bounded forward with a loud roar, but, instead of running away, Diederich stood firm. The lion stopped, and gazed at his enemy in the face, and then they stood looking at one another face to face for some minutes. At last the lion slunk back, as though to go away. Then the hunter thought he might venture to reload his gun; but directly he moved, the lion looked over his shoulder, and giving a low growl came back a few paces. Diederich stood still, and once more the lion moved away. Again the hunter tried to load his gun, and again the lion returned, growling with anger. At last, however, he marched off, though Diederich did not venture to mount his horse till he was fairly out of sight.

When the lion attacks the buffalo, or the great

rhinoceros,* there is a terrible battle, though the lion generally comes off victorious. There is one animal, however, far weaker and smaller than either of these, which is able to kill the king of beasts, as the lion is called, from his superior strength and courage. This is a kind of antelope which is called the *gemsbok*, or *oryx*. It is about the size and colour of a common ass, but on its head it has two very long, straight horns. When it sees the lion in the act of springing on it, the gemsbok lowers its head, and receives its enemy on the point of these sharp horns. It is always itself killed by the shock, and the lion and the gemsbok die together, so that the traveller in central Africa often finds the skeletons of both these animals whitening together on the plains.

The boldness of the lion in the presence of an enemy, and his grand and majestic appearance, has been often described. The following is from the journal of an African traveller, and may give some idea of this noble beast as he is to be seen in his native deserts.

"We travelled for a mile or two," he says, "by the side of a river which was edged with tall rushes. The dogs seemed to enjoy prowling about, and examining every bushy place, till at last they met with some object, at which they set up a loud barking. We explored the spot with caution, suspecting that there were lions. At last the dogs drove them out, and we had a full view of an enormous black-maned lion and lioness. The lioness escaped among the rushes, but the lion came steadily forward, and stood still to look at us. At this moment we felt our danger, as he seemed to be preparing to spring

* The word rhinoceros literally means an animal *with a horn on its nose.*

on us, and we were standing on the bank at the distance of only a few yards.

"But at this instant the dogs flew boldly in between us and the lion, and, surrounding him, kept him at bay by their violent and resolute barking. The lion, conscious of his strength, remained unmoved, and kept his head turned towards us. Once the dogs advanced close to his feet, as though they would actually seize him. But they paid dearly for their impudence, for without abandoning the steady and majestic attitude in which he stood, he merely moved his paw, and the next instant I beheld two lying dead. Meanwhile we did not lose a moment of the time which we had gained by the courageous interference of our dogs. We fired; and one of the balls passed through the side of the lion. Still he remained standing as before, and we felt certain he would spring on us: but, happily, we were mistaken; and were not sorry to see him move quietly away. Notwithstanding the pain of a wound of which he must soon afterwards have died, he did so, however, with a stately and measured step."

Mr. Gordon Cumming, who has given us so many interesting pictures of the life of an African hunter, tells us that on one occasion when he had gone out, accompanied by two hundred and fifty natives, in search of elephants, he was suddenly astonished at seeing a majestic lion slowly advancing towards them, with a dignified step and undaunted bearing, presenting the most noble and imposing appearance. He lashed his tail from side to side as he stalked along, with his eyes glaring wildly and his teeth displayed, whilst from time to time he sent forth low and terrible growls. The natives all fled in terror, but the dogs instantly faced the lion, and advanced to the attack. He seemed, however, to scorn the combat, and, having succeeded in putting his

enemies to flight by the mere terror of his aspect, he began to retire towards the background, where the hunters now perceived a lioness and her cubs, whose retreat the brave lion had thus been guarding. He followed them with a haughty and independent step, growling fiercely at the dogs, which trotted along on either side of him; and the hunters, being in search of other game, suffered him to depart unmolested.

20.

WORSE THAN THE TIGERS.

ad-dress, *to speak to.*
chan-nel, *a narrow sea connecting two larger seas together.*
op-por-tu-ni-ty, *an occasion, a suitable time for doing any thing.*

"I DID not say that you were worse than a tiger in general, but only that I once knew some tigers that were, in one respect, better than you." It was thus that Uncle John addressed his little nephew Mark, who had that morning been rude and disobedient to his mother. "How were the tigers better than I am?" said Mark, who loved his uncle, and wanted very much to hear what he had to say about the tigers. "Why, they were grateful, and you are ungrateful," he replied. "Nonsense, uncle!" said Mark; "but do tell us what tigers you are thinking about." "Yes, do," said the other children, as they gathered round him, full of delight at the thought of a story.

"Well," said Uncle John, "in the course of my travels I once stopped at the port of Havre, in France. If you had not been in the habit, like other foolish boys, of wasting your time at school in whispering and playing instead of attending to

your lessons, you would be able to tell me where Havre is situated." "So I can," said Mark; "it is on the northern coast of France, on the shore of the English Channel."

"Right," said his uncle; "I see you have studied your geography better than I thought. And it was up the English Channel that I sailed when I went to Havre." "And have they tigers in France?" said one of the children. "They had some at a wild-beast show when I was there," replied their uncle. "It was in a sort of tent outside the town; and one evening, as I was strolling about, I thought I would go in and see the tigers. When I had taken my seat, I saw before me a number of cages, and in each cage there was a tiger. They were roaring dreadfully, and they walked backwards and forwards, and jumped up and down as if they were in a great fury."

"How frightened I should have been!" said Fanny. "No, there were strong iron bars in front of the cage; so we were not afraid. In a few minutes a young girl came in. She was dressed all in white, and was about fifteen years of age, and she took her stand in front of the cages. Presently some rough-looking men came in, bringing some baskets full of meat with them."

"Meat!" exclaimed Fanny; "what was that for?" "It was to feed the tigers with," said her uncle. "The girl took a pitchfork, and with it held a piece of meat to one of the tigers, who immediately seized it, and pulled it through the bars of his cage. Then he crouched down and began to gnaw it; and so she went on till each one of the tigers had been fed."

"And was that all that you saw?" said Mark, who had expected something more amusing. "By no means," replied Uncle John. "When the girl had

gone away, the showman came forward and said that if we would wait until all the tigers had eaten their meat, we should see the young lady go into their cage. After a few minutes, therefore, we saw her return; she went into the cages by a door which opened at the back, and passed through the whole row of tigers." "And did they not bite her?" asked Fanny. "No; they jumped about and played with her, as if they had been so many kittens." "Well," said Mark, "I wonder at that; I should have thought they would have torn her to pieces." "Yes," replied his uncle, "I daresay *you* would have torn her to pieces, if *you* had been one of the tigers; I am sure you would; but they had more gratitude. They remembered that she had given them their food, and they were thankful to her for it. They did whatever she bid them. She made them jump through a hoop which she held in her hand, or lie down and put their heads on her knee. They were grateful, because she had fed them. If you had been one of them, I have no doubt you would have torn her in pieces if she had fed you for ten years." "Oh, uncle," said Mark, "how can you say so!" "Well, if you had not torn her to pieces, you would at least have refused to obey her. You would have laid yourself down in a corner and gone to sleep, and would have done nothing she asked you to do."

"But what makes you think I should have done so?" asked Mark, who did not like the idea of being thought worse than the tigers. "Because that is the way you have acted towards your mother," replied Uncle John. "She has been feeding you and taking care of you for these ten years past, and doing every thing to make you happy; and now, when an opportunity comes for you to show her some little return, you won't do it. She bids you take a letter

to the post for her, and you run off and hide. I don't believe there is one of the tigers that would have acted in such a way."

Mark hung his head, and looked very much ashamed. "I am sorry for what I did, uncle," he said at last; "I was very wrong, but I did not think."

"That is just the difference between you and the tigers," persisted his uncle. "They *did* think. When they saw the young girl coming into their dens, they said to themselves, 'Ah, here comes the young lady who has given us so many good suppers. Now we will do whatever she asks us.' But a boy, when he sees his mother, never says, 'Here is the kind mother who has taken care of me all my life, and I will do whatever she asks of me.' Instead of that, he only runs off and hides." "Uncle," said Mark, "I will never do so again." "I am glad to hear you say so," said Uncle John; "the best thing you can do now is to watch for every opportunity, for a month to come, of doing some service or other for your mother. And see, whilst we have been talking, I have mended your top which was broken. I am half afraid of giving it to you lest you should bite me, or do some ungrateful thing." "Oh, uncle," said Mark, who was now fairly ashamed of himself, "you are really too bad. I will run to my mother at once and ask her pardon; and I will tell her I will carry her letter, or do any thing else she pleases; only you must promise never again to tell me that I am *worse than the tigers.*"

21.

WE ARE SEVEN; OR, A CHILD'S NOTION OF DEATH.

A SIMPLE child,
That lightly draws its breath
And feels its life in every limb—
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage-girl,—
  She was eight years old, she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl,
  That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic woodland air,
  And she was wildly clad;
Her eyes were fair, and very fair—
  Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little maid,
  How many may you be?"
"How many? seven in all," she said,
  And, wondering, looked at me.

"And where are they? I pray you tell."
  She answered, "Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
  And two are gone to sea;

Two of us in the churchyard lie,
  My sister and my brother;
And in the churchyard-cottage I
  Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell,
  And two are gone to sea;
Yet you are seven! I pray you tell,
  Sweet maid, how this may be."

Then did the little maid reply,
  "Seven boys and girls are we;
Two of us in the churchyard lie,
  Beneath the churchyard-tree."

"You run about, my little maid,
  Your limbs they are alive;
If two are in the churchyard laid,
  Then you are only five."

"Their graves are green, they may be see
The little maid replied;
"Twelve steps or more from my mother's
And they are side by side.

My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem;
And there upon the ground I sit—
I sit and sing to them.

And often after sunset, sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

The first that died was little Jane;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain,
And then she went away.

So in the churchyard she was laid;
And all the summer dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go;
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven?"
The little maiden did reply,
"O master, we are seven!"

"But they are dead, those two are dead;
Their spirits are in heaven!"
'Twas throwing words away; for still
The little maid would have her will,
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"

22.

STORIES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY. NO. II.

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

dis-em-bark, *to land out of a ship.*
gi-gan-tic, *very tall and large, like a giant.*
as-sail-ant, *one who attacks another.*

When St. Edward died, he left no heirs to succeed him; and Harold, an English earl, seized the throne, and was crowned king by the English nobles. Whilst St. Edward was still alive, Harold had been taken prisoner by William, Duke of Normandy, who, as the price of his liberty, had made him swear on holy relics to help him to win the crown whenever King Edward should die. But though Harold took the oath, he had no intention of keeping it; for he had made up his mind to be King of England himself.

William was hunting in the forest near Rouen, when the news was brought him that Harold had been crowned king. The bow dropped from his hand, and he stood for a minute looking so fierce and angry that no man dared to speak to him. Then he galloped home to his castle, and entering the great hall, he threw himself into a chair, and remained there with his face buried in his hands for some hours. When at last he recovered from this storm of passion, he began to make preparations for invading England. If you look at the map, you will see that Normandy is a province in France exactly opposite the coast of Sussex. When, therefore, William had collected a great fleet and army, he sailed across the English Channel, and prepared to land in Pevensey Bay. He had nearly three thousand ships with him; and that in which he himself sailed was splendidly painted and gilded. Its sails

were purple and crimson, and embroid
golden lions (the arms of Normandy), and
masthead there hung a blessed banner, w
been sent him by the Pope. Having cas
in the Bay of Pevensey, the Normans disem
When the men and horses had all landed, the
of Bayeux, Duke William's brother, said Ma
gave his blessing to the troops. Then W
mounted his horse, and hung round the neck
animal some of those relics on which Harol
taken his oath.

The Saxons were drawn up ready for battle
little hill about nine miles from the town of H
ings; they were all on foot, and armed with gr
battle-axes. The Normans were mostly mounted
horseback, and they now rode forward to meet th
enemies, shouting their battle-cry of "God is ou
aid!" At their head rode a gigantic Norman, whos
name was Taillefer, singing a popular ballad abou
the great deeds done by the heroes of France; and
as he sung, he threw his huge sword into the air,
and caught it as lightly as if it had been a feather.
He had asked the duke to suffer him to strike the
first blow, and he now attacked the English ranks and
struck down two of their soldiers. But the Saxons
raised their cry of "Christ's Rood! the Holy Rood!"
and as the Norman horsemen galloped against them,
they met them with such a firm front that they
drove their assailants back with empty saddles, and
Taillefer was the first to fall. Again and again the
Normans charged, but they could not pierce their
way through the English ranks; and the brave men
of Kent, who, according to their ancient custom,
filled the first line, hewed down men and horses
with the blows of their great battle-axes. Duke
William's horse was killed under him, and a cry
was raised that he was dead. But he soon sprang

upon a fresh steed, and, taking off his helmet, he galloped through the ranks, exclaiming, "Here I am; I am still alive, and with God's help I will conquer!" At last, just as the sun was setting, an arrow, shot at random, pierced the eye of King Harold. He had fought bravely all the day; but now he fell dead on the field at the foot of his own royal standard. The English lost heart at the death of their leader, and the Normans remained masters of the field. Then William set up his own standard on the spot where Harold had been slain, and gathering his men around him, he called out the names of all the knights and nobles who had followed him from France. One-fourth of their number gave no answer, they were lying dead on the bloody battle-ground; and a new roll was made out, containing the names of all those who survived, and who now eagerly claimed the lands and honours of the conquered English.

William was now crowned King of England, and one of his first acts was to raise a great abbey on the hill where he had gained this victory. He called it Battle Abbey, and its high-altar was placed exactly over the spot where Harold's standard had been planted. The monks were charged to sing Masses for the repose of the souls of all who had fallen in that day's fight; and the great roll containing the names of the Norman conquerors was given to their keeping, and called the "Roll of Battle Abbey."

A search was made for Harold's body; and his aged mother offered to buy it for its weight in gold, that she might give it Christian burial. When at last it was found, all covered with wounds, William commanded it to be buried on the sea-shore at Hastings. "He guarded the English coast when living," he said; "let him guard it is now that he dead."

His commands were obeyed; but some of his friends found means to steal away the body, which they carried to the abbey of Waltham, which the unfortunate king had founded during his lifetime. Here, therefore, were laid the remains of our last Saxon king; and the monks of Waltham, having placed him in his grave, cut over his tomb this simple inscription:

"Here lies the unhappy Harold."

The ruins of Battle Abbey are still standing: but the spot where once stood the high-altar of the church is now occupied by a beautiful flower-garden; and the roses and convolvulus may be seen twining about the broken pillars of the nave.

23.

DESCRIPTIVE GEOGRAPHY. NO. II.

FRANCE.

vine-yards, *fields planted with vines.*
art-i-san, *a workman.*
mis-sion-a-ry, *one sent to preach the faith.*
por-ce-lain, *a fine sort of china.*
pro-fu-sion, *a large quantity.*

FRANCE, which lies opposite to Great Britain on the other side of the English Channel, occupies a considerable portion of the west of Europe. It is a large and powerful kingdom, with a fertile soil and a good climate; and its numerous seaports on the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, and the English Channel, afford an easy communication with every other country in Europe. It is watered by several fine rivers, such as the Loire, the Seine, and the Rhone; in the south and west the country is mountainous and very beautiful, but the central part is occupied by a wide flat plain.

The people who inhabit the different provinces of France are not all descended from the same race, and differ from one another considerably both in character and appearance. Those who live in Brittany, a large province in the west, are descended, like the Welsh, from the ancient Britons, some of whom fled over here on the invasion of their own country by the Saxons. Normandy, again, takes its name from the Normans, or Northmen, who settled here under Duke Rollo. It lies just opposite to the English coast; and for many years after the conquest of England by Duke William of Normandy, it belonged to the English kings.

France used formerly to be divided into thirty-five provinces, the names of which are still often used. But some years ago the country was marked out into eighty-six smaller divisions, which are called *departments;* and this is why, in a book of maps, we generally find two maps of France, one divided into provinces, and the other into departments.

Paris, the capital of France, stands on the river Seine, in one of the northern departments. It is the gayest city in Europe, and is full of beautiful public buildings. The air, too, is very clear; for the people do not burn coal as they do in London, and the smoke from their wood-fires does not darken the air, or blacken the buildings. There are many other large and beautiful cities in France, such as Lyons on the Rhone, Marseilles on the southern coast, and Bordeaux on the Bay of Biscay, which are the three chief seats of commerce. Brest, Toulon, and Havre-de-Grace, are the principal ports and naval stations. One of the most valuable of the French manufactures is silk. Great numbers of silkworms are reared in the southern provinces, where you may see the roads planted on either side with mulberry-

trees, with the leaves of which the silkworms are fed. A great quantity of beautiful silk is made at Lyons, and sent from thence to all parts of Europe. France is also celebrated for its wines. All the middle and southern provinces are full of vineyards, which, however, have none of the beauty of those in the north of Italy; for the vines are trained on short sticks, and look very much like gooseberry-trees. Another manufacture in which the French greatly excel is that of porcelain, or fine china-ware. Their glass and jewelry are also much admired.

The climate in the south of France is much warmer than in the north; and the soil produces an abundance of figs, olives, and even oranges. The scenery in that part which borders the river Rhone, and in the provinces which lie nearest to Spain, is very beautiful. Here there are fine views of woods and mountains; the topmost summits of the hills are clothed in snow, while at their foot are vineyards and groves of figs and chestnuts. Even in winter the air is warm and soft, and in the summer it is loaded with rich scents from a profusion of sweet-smelling flowers. There is one part of the southern coast where nothing is cultivated but flowers, and you may travel for many miles through a land of brilliant gardens. The flowers are used in the manufacture of those perfumes which are nowhere so well made as in this country.

The French are a lively people, fond of gaiety and amusement; they make excellent soldiers, and are likewise skilful artisans, so that they are employed in other countries in many of the finer branches of various manufactures. The peasant women of France, especially those of Normandy and Brittany, wear large white caps upon their heads like towers, and these caps have sometimes long flaps hanging down on *either side, which* has a curious effect.

The great mass of the French people are Catholics, and they have done much to extend the knowledge of the true faith. French missionaries are to be found in almost every land,—in America, China, Africa, and the Pacific Isles; and several great saints have been natives of this country, such as St. Louis, St. Bernard, and St. Vincent of Paul.

There have been many revolutions, or changes of government, in France during the last century, but it is now governed by an emperor; and from its wealth, position, and military resources, is one of the most powerful of the European states.

24.

SEA-FOWL.

crev-i-ces, *holes, cracks, as in a rock.*
ex-pert, *clever, skilful.*
sta-tion-a-ry, *in one place, fixed.*
to pro-ject, *to jut out.*
suc-cour, *help.*
vig-our, *strength.*

THERE are some kinds of birds which can swim in the water as well as fly in the air, such as ducks, swans, and geese. These birds are what is called *web-footed;* that is to say, their claws are joined together by a thick skin, which is stretched between them. When they swim, they push against the water with these webbed feet, which serve them for oars, and thus help them to move through the water. Many birds of this kind are found on the rocks and islands of the northern and southern oceans. They lay their eggs in the crevices of these rocks, and live on the fish which they catch in the sea. Most of them are very expert in diving after their prey, so that one whole class of sea-fowl is known by the

name of *divers*. Another of these birds is called the petrel, and has been given this name after the Apostle St. Peter, who, at the word of our Lord, walked upon the water. Petrels have a singular power of running, as it were, over the surface of the water. They stretch out their long wings, so that the air supports their bodies, which are very light, and their broad webbed feet just pat the tops of the waves, over which they skim with surprising swiftness.

These birds are of great value to the inhabitants of those desolate regions where they are chiefly found. If you look at the map of Scotland, you will see a group of islands on the western coast. These are the Hebrides, or Western Islands. The most westerly of the group, which is called St. Kilda's, is little more than a barren rock in the midst of the Atlantic Ocean. It yields no crops; and the poor people who dwell on the dreary spot find their *chief* support in the flocks of petrels and other sea-fowl which frequent their shores. The birds and their eggs serve them for food, their feathers supply them with bedding, and the oil and fat, which are procured from them in great quantities, furnish them with lamps and candles to be burnt during the long winter-nights. In short, their value to these poor islanders is so great, that it is a common proverb among them, "Take away the petrels, and St. Kilda is no more." The bird-catchers of St. Kilda's expose themselves to the greatest dangers in following their trade. Sometimes, by means of a single rope, they swing themselves across to one of the rugged rocks on which the petrels build their nests. At other times they let themselves down from the top of their steep crags, holding the rope with one hand, while with the other they secure their prey. Yet, in spite of the perils to which they are exposed, accidents are very rare; for the islanders are almost as much used

to make their way up and down their crags as the gulls and petrels themselves. The ropes which they use are of two kinds; one is made of skins, and the other of cow's hair. The former are considered the strongest, and they are made in the following manner: the skin of a sheep and of a cow are cut into slips; each slip of sheep's hide is plaited to one of cow's hide, and then two of these plaits are twisted together, so as to form a rope which measures about three inches round. The ropes are sometimes two hundred feet in length, and are valued so highly, that at St. Kilda's one of them is looked on as sufficient to give as the marriage-portion of a bride. In fact, the very existence of the people of these islands depends upon this, which is almost their only trade.

Sometimes bird-catchers go out alone, without any companion to hold the rope, or to assist them in case of danger. Many stories are told of their strange and perilous adventures. It happened once that a man, having fastened his rope to a stake which he had driven into the top of the cliff, let himself down from a great height, till he reached a mass of rock which overhung a kind of cave. He succeeded in swinging himself into the cave, where, in his eagerness to collect the birds and eggs which lay around him, he forgot to secure the rope, which presently slipped from his grasp, and, after swinging backwards and forwards once or twice, hung stationary over the ledge of rock which jutted out far beyond the entrance. He at once saw his danger. The rock projected over his head in such a way as to render it quite impossible for him to climb up the side of the cliff without the help of the rope, which a single glance showed him was beyond his reach. One chance of escape alone remained for him: by a desperate leap he might spring out far enough to catch the rope; but if he failed in the attempt, he must

fall, and be dashed to pieces on the sharp r
which the waves were breaking. But it wa
hope; so, stretching out his arms, he coll
his strength, and sprang from the ledge on
stood. The rope was caught, and in a few
the brave islander was once more in safety.

The plan is sometimes adopted of setting
for the birds over night in the spots to which the
frequently resort; these snares are examined
morning, and often afford a large supply. A
catcher of St. Kilda's had once been fixing some
for this purpose upon a ledge of rock about one
dred and fifty feet above the level of the sea, and
about once more to take up his rope, when, unfort
ately, his foot caught in one of the nooses, and, bef
he was aware of the fact, he tripped up, and fell ov
the edge of the precipice. There he hung by one le
with a full view of the boiling surf below him. I
vain he wrenched his body round, and strove to grasp
the ledge from which he had fallen: all his exertions
were to no purpose; the bare stone afforded nothing
to his grasp, and his strength became rapidly ex-
hausted. He shouted and screamed till the rock
re-echoed with his cries, but no one was at hand t
lend him succour; the shades of night were fast clos-
ing in, and he was obliged to resign himself patiently
to his fate, hoping that the morning might bring hi
some assistance. In this situation he passed the live
long night. Pierced with cold, suffering the severe
agony, the weight of his whole body being supporte
by one limb alone, and each moment expecting th
noose to give way and cast him headlong into th
angry waters, it seemed as if the hours would neve
end. But morning came at last, and his eyes wan
dered anxiously around in search of some sign of life
Who can describe the pleasure that thrilled throug
his bosom when he first distinctly recognised the form

of a companion! The sight gave new vigour to his frame; he summoned all his strength, and uttered a loud cry for help. His call was heard, and no time was lost in relieving him from his dreadful situation.

We, who have been brought up in comparative ease and luxury, can scarcely picture to ourselves a more wretched lot than that of these poor islanders, compelled to undergo such toils, and to expose themselves to such dangers, in order to earn the bare necessaries of life; yet, strange as it may seem, they are strongly attached to their native rocks, and would be unwilling to give up their lives of peril and bold adventure in order to engage in the quieter and less exciting pursuits of a residence in cities.

25.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW AND THE EIDER-DUCK.

to fre-quent', *to come often to a place.*
cen-tu-ry, *a hundred years.*
sanc-ti-ty, *holiness.*

HAVING spoken in the last lesson of some of the sea-fowl which frequent the British coasts, we will add a story about another of these birds, which, though chiefly an inhabitant of the frozen rocks of Iceland and Norway, is also to be found in some parts of this country. It is called the eider-duck, and its nests are eagerly sought after on account of the light and beautiful down with which they are lined. This down is plucked by the bird from off her own breast; and when her nest is robbed, she will strip herself a second, and even a third time, till her breast is perfectly bare, and will then pluck the down from her mate to cover her eggs. In Iceland, the eider-ducks build their nests on little islands not far from the shore, and sometimes quite close to the houses of the natives, who are so careful to protect them from

injury, that the birds become very tame. They are found in many parts of the north and west of Scotland; but the only place which they frequent in England is the little island of Farne, off the coast of Northumberland. This island was the spot where the great St. Cuthbert built his hermitage; and for many centuries after his time, it continued to be the abode of holy men, who chose it as a place of retirement and prayer.

Farne has always been a favourite resort for the eider-ducks; and such was the respect with which the island was regarded on account of the sanctity of the hermits who inhabited it, that in old times no one ever dreamed of disturbing the birds that built there, or robbing their precious nests. They therefore assembled there in great numbers, and grew so tame, that they would suffer themselves to be stroked and handled whilst sitting on their eggs. Some of them would build close to the altar of the hermit's chapel, and no one dared to hurt them, or even to touch their eggs without permission.

One of the most famous of the hermits who lived here, after the time of St. Cuthbert, was St. Bartholomew of Whitby. He was a man of such a gentle and loving temper even to the dumb creatures that thronged the island, that they learnt to know him, and the birds never showed any sign of alarm when he approached their nests. It happened once, that as a duck was leading her newly-fledged little ones to the water, one of the young birds fell into a deep crack in the rocks, and was unable to free itself. The old duck stood by, showing every appearance of trouble and anxiety. At last a happy thought seemed to occur to her, and she made her way to the cell where St. Bartholomew was engaged in prayer. Taking his tunic in her beak, she gently pulled it, till she had roused his attention. He rose, thinking

she was in search of her nest under the place where he was sitting; but as she continued to pull his garment, he at last understood that she wished him to follow her. He therefore left the cell, and the bird fluttered on before him, till she had brought him to the spot where her young one had fallen. He clambered down, and soon succeeded in restoring it to its mother. Having thanked him with many delighted gestures, she once more plunged into the water, and St. Bartholomew went back to his cell.

The inhabitants of Farne still give to these birds the name of St. Cuthbert's ducks. The spot, indeed, is no longer regarded as holy, and the eider-ducks have therefore ceased to find it a secure place of refuge. Their nests are robbed, and they and their young ones are every year shot by hundreds; yet they will not desert the island; and a few years ago one of their nests was found built within a stone coffin which lies, overhung with wild flowers and brambles, in the ruined hermitage of St. Cuthbert.

26.

SOMETHING ABOUT SEEDS.

scat-ter, *to cast abroad.* de-li-ci-ous, *delightful.*

If you take a dry seed of some plant in your hand, and look at it, you will find it difficult to believe that there is any life at all in it. Yet there *is* life shut up in that little prison, and, if only let out, it will do great things. Out of a little brown apple-pip, when it is planted in the ground, there will grow a tree, which will bear a mass of beautiful flowers, and some, when autumn comes, will be loaded with delicious fruit. The tall oak, out of the timbers of which is built a stately man-of-war, grew from nothing but a single acorn; and in that acorn all the life of the great tree was once shut up.

The life that is in seeds will remain in them for many years. A city was once buried beneath a stream of lava which flowed from a volcano. Many hundred years afterwards, some people dug through the lava, and discovered the city. They opened passages into the streets and houses, and found every thing just as it had been left on the day when the hot stream of lava passed over it. And among other things that they found were some bags of garden-seeds. These were sown in the ground, and though they had been buried nearly seventeen hundred years, they sprang up, and bore flowers and fruit.

All the seeds that drop from trees and plants do not take root and live. Some perish in the earth, and a great number serve as food for birds and other creatures. If every seed were to live and spring up, we should have more trees and plants than the earth could bear.

Of those seeds that do live, all do not spring up exactly in the spot where they fall from the tree. If this were to be the case, we should have one spot in the world covered with oaks, and another with fir-trees, and another with roses, and so on. Only one kind of plant would grow in one spot; and this would be very inconvenient.

But God in His wisdom has so ordered things that seeds are scattered abroad, some here and some there; and thus every part of the world is supplied with a vast variety of plants. This is done in many ways. Some seeds grow inside pods; and when the seeds are ripe, the pods burst open, and shoot out the seeds with great violence, so that they fall on the ground at a considerable distance from the plant on which they grew. Others, like the seed of the maple or sycamore-tree, have a little fibre like a bird's wing; and so when it falls, the air takes it, and whirls it far away. Others are very slender and delicate, and

have a tuft of soft feathery down at one end. The seeds of the dandelion are of this kind, and you must often have seen them floating in the breeze, and perhaps have amused yourself by plucking one of the heads of seed, and blowing all its silky tufts into the air. On they float, now resting on the ground, now again blown forward by the wind, till they travel miles across mountains and even rivers, and settle at last in some hollow place, where they take root, and bring forth other seeds. Birds also carry a great many seeds from one place to another; and sometimes they float down streams and rivers, and even across wide oceans, to islands and continents, where at last they grow and live. In these and other ways, the trees and plants which are so useful and necessary to man are scattered far and wide. Those which grow in greatest abundance are the most easy to scatter, because they are so very small, and these are the seeds of grasses, mosses, and ferns. Humble as they seem, they are the most useful plants of any that grow, because on them the lives of so many animals depend; and therefore our good Creator has scattered them the widest, that there should be no spot in the earth where the animals that He has created should perish for lack of food.

27.

CASABIANCA.

At the battle of the Nile, Casabianca, a boy of thirteen years old, son to the French admiral, remained at his post in the ship *L'Orient* after it had taken fire; and the gallant youth perished in the explosion of the vessel, when the flames had reached the powder.

THE boy stood on the burning deck,
Whence all but him had fled;
The flame that lit the battle's wreck
Shone round him o'er the dead.

Yet beautiful and bright he stood,
  As born to rule the storm;
A creature of heroic blood,
  A proud though childlike form.

The flames rolled on—he would not go
  Without his father's word;
That father, faint in death below,
  His voice no longer heard.
He called aloud, "Say, father, say,
  If yet my task is done?"
He knew not that the chieftain lay
  Unconscious of his son.

"Speak, father!" once again he cried,
  "If I may yet be gone:
And—" but the booming shots replied,
  And fast the flames rolled on.
Upon his brow he felt their breath,
  And in his waving hair;
And look'd from that lone post of death
  In still yet brave despair.

And shouted but once more aloud,
  "My father, must I stay?"
While o'er him fast through sail and shroud
  The wreathing fires made way.
They wrapt the ship in splendour wild,
  They caught the flag on high;
And stream'd above the gallant child
  Like banners in the sky.

Then came a burst of thunder sound:
  The boy—Oh, where was he?
Ask of the winds, that far around
  With fragments strew'd the sea,—
With mast and helm and pennon fair,
  That well had borne their part;
But the noblest thing that perish'd there
  Was that young faithful heart.

28.

DESCRIPTIVE GEOGRAPHY. NO. III.

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

pen-in-su-la, *a piece of land almost surrounded by water.*
de-scend-ing, *going down.*
pro-ject-ing, *sticking out.*
fort-ress, *a castle, or fortified town.*

SPAIN and Portugal are contained in the peninsula which forms the south-western portion of Europe. We often speak of it as "the Peninsula," because it is the most important one near us. It is bounded on the north and north-west by the Atlantic, on the east and south by the Mediterranean; and towards the south-west, these two great bodies of water are joined together by the narrow sea called the Straits of Gibraltar. There is only one land-boundary—the mountain-chain of the Pyrenees, which divides the north-east of Spain from France. If you look at the map of Spain and Portugal, you will see a great many chains of mountains besides the Pyrenees; the whole peninsula is made up of valleys, bounded by mountains on three sides, and gradually descending lower to the sea-coast. Every valley has a river flowing through it; the largest rivers are the Tagus and Douro, which rise amongst the mountains in the middle of Spain, but flow through Portugal to the sea. And you will notice that the mountains are called *sierras;* that is because the Spanish mountains are jagged at the top, like the teeth of a saw, and *sierra* is the Spanish for 'saw.'

The centre of Spain, called Castile, is very high land, surrounded by mountains higher still. It is partly stony and barren, with rugged hills here and there, and villages perched on the heights; and

partly flat sandy land, covered with corn, but without a tree or any thing green to be seen for miles. Madrid, the capital of the country, stands in the midst of a desolate wilderness, where there is nothing for the eye to rest upon excepting bare rocks and dusty high-roads. But the people of Castile do not care about trees and grass, and they admire their city very much. It has a fine palace and some other handsome buildings. Twenty-five miles from Madrid, there is a famous collection of buildings, called the Escurial,—convents, hospitals, libraries, and a church, joined together in the form of a gridiron, and a royal palace built out at one side, so as to form the handle. This was done in honour of St. Lawrence the martyr, who, as you know, was broiled to death on a gridiron, and who is honoured in Spain with great devotion. Every other part of Spain is more agreeable than Castile. In the north, cherry-trees grow to the size of elms, and nuts are in such abundance, that quantities are sent away to England; but in the south and east, fruit is still more plentiful. We receive from those parts of Spain figs and grapes, oranges, lemons, dates, and raisins, besides a great deal of wine, particularly that kind called *sherry*, from the town of Xeres,* where it is chiefly made. There are some places where the country-people say it is always harvest-time; for they have no sooner gathered one kind of grain, or vegetables, or fruit, than another crop is ready.

Mulberry-trees and silkworms are the chief care of some of the people; in other parts they have rice and sugar-canes. Wherever there is water, the ground is like a garden for fruitfulness; but much of it is left waste. In these waste places, however, many sweet-smelling trees, such as the myrtle and gum-cistus, spring up of themselves, and beneath

* Pronounced *Sherres*.

them grow lavender, thyme, and rosemary. A ride over the green wilderness is delightful in the cool evening or early morning, for the air is loaded with perfume; but in the south of Spain, during several months in the year, it is too hot to be out in the middle of the day. The tradesmen shut up their shops at noon, and every body lies down to rest; but towards evening the shops are open again, and the work of the day goes on till dark.

The southern provinces of Spain were for a long time in the hands of the Moors, a people of Arab race, and some of their most beautiful palaces still remain, especially at Granada. The most famous of all is called the Alhambra. They built their dwelling-houses in the Eastern fashion, round an inner court, with trees and a fountain in the centre; and in the summer an awning was spread over the court, and the family lived there and not in-doors. Many such houses are to be seen at Seville and some other towns in the south, and they are extremely pleasant; but the streets are narrow and crooked, with balconies and windows projecting above them, so as to keep off the sun.

Cadiz is the chief place of trade in Spain; but Malaga has the finest harbour. Between Malaga and Cadiz you will find Gibraltar, which belongs to England. It is one of the strongest fortresses in the world, built on a rock which overlooks the sea towards Africa. This rock is the only place in Europe where monkeys are to be found; they are of a dark fawn-colour, and have no tails.

Portugal looks like a strip of Spain. It has the same fruitful soil and warm climate, only that Portugal is even warmer.

The chief places in Portugal are Lisbon, the capital of the kingdom, and Oporto. Lisbon is on the banks of the Tagus, about nine miles above the place

where it enters the sea. It is a beautiful city at, as you sail up the river, and see the glit white houses and garden-terraces on the hill Lisbon is built mostly on high ground. O stands on the sea, and gives its name to the wine, which is sent from thence to this count large quantities.

The people of Spain and Portugal are all Ca lics, and many of the saints most honoured by Church were natives of these countries. St. Domin St. Ignatius Loyola, and St. Teresa were all Sp niards; and the great St. Francis Xavier was Portuguese. The Spanish churches are very richl ornamented; at Montserrat, where there is a famou church dedicated to our Lady, the chalices are covered all over with rubies and emeralds. At Compostella, in Galicia, is preserved the body of the apostle St. James; he is looked on as the patron-saint of Spain, and crowds of pilgrims come from all parts of the world to visit his holy relics.

29.

FATHER THOMAS OF JESUS.

war-ri-or, *one who makes war.*
pir-a-cy, *robbery at sea.*
am-bas-sa-dor, *one sent on a message.*
com-pen-sa-tion, *that which makes up to us for loss.*

WE are going to relate the story of a hero,—of one, hat is, who did great things, above what most men e able to do, and whose name deserves, therefore, be held in honour and veneration. This is what commonly meant when we speak of a hero; but ople differ very much in their choice of those to om they give the name. Some nations have given o men who had great bodily strength, which en- d them to kill wild beasts, and perform other

courageous actions; the heroes of other countries are warriors who have conquered half the world, carrying fire and sword before them. In our own day, we do not hear much about heroes of any kind; but men seem inclined to give the highest praise to those who are persevering in their worldly calling, who work hard day and night, and who, in reward for their labours, get on in life and make a large fortune.

Our hero, however, did none of these things. He was a poor Augustinian friar, who lived in Portugal about three hundred years ago, and his name was Father Thomas of Jesus. The north of Africa was then, as now, inhabited by the Moors, who were Mahometans, and lived by piracy. Every year they carried off great numbers of Christians to be their slaves; and at last King Sebastian of Portugal fitted out a great fleet and army, with which he set out for Africa, intending to punish the Moors, and to release the Christian slaves.

Father Thomas resolved to join the fleet, not that he might fight with the Moors, but in order to visit the Christian prisoners, and console them in their sufferings. The Mahometans did all they could to make their captives give up their faith; and many were so worn out by their long imprisonment, that they consented to deny Christ in order to obtain their release.

Father Thomas knew this, and he hoped to be able to win back some of these unhappy men; and he had now joined the Christian fleet with the fixed determination of letting himself be taken prisoner by the Moors, whenever the ship in which he sailed should be attacked. He would then, as he well knew, be committed to the dungeons where the Christians were confined, and would thus have an opportunity of administering to them the spiritual assistance they so greatly needed.

In the first battle which took place be
Moors and the Portuguese, Father Thoma
his wish. He was taken prisoner and
Africa, where he was sold as a slave, and
the common dungeon, whence he was led e
to work in the mines with a number of his
comrades. Here he had to endure the most
ful sufferings: sometimes he was left for day
out food; he was chained, beaten, and spit
and, weak and exhausted as he became to th
utmost, his master failed not every day to drive
to the mines. Nothing, however, seemed to cast
down; he had expected nothing better, and he fo
ample compensation for all his sufferings in the
portunity thus afforded him of confirming his fello
prisoners in the faith, and comforting them with t
Sacraments.

But his weak frame could not bear up agains
so many privations, and he soon became so ill, that
his life was despaired of. Just then, however, there
arrived at Morocco an ambassador, whom the King
of Spain had sent to treat with the Moors, and ran-
om some of the captives. The ambassador heard
f Father Thomas, and at once used his influence to
et him moved from the prison, and placed in the
use of a Christian merchant; and assured him
at he would spare no pains in order to obtain his
ease.

But Father Thomas did not wish to be released.
here is but one favour I would ask of your lord-
" he replied; "and I doubt not you will have
r to obtain me what I ask for. I shall never
health and strength as I now am; but there
place in Morocco where I have work to do,
here, as I well know, God will give me my

nd where is that?" said the ambassador.

"You have only to name your wish, and, so far as may be, I will see that it is granted."

"That is kindly spoken," said Father Thomas; "and since you are so charitable as to interest yourself in one like me, I would pray you to apply to the Moorish chief that I may be conveyed, without delay, to the great prison of the Sagena."

When the ambassador heard the name of the Sagena, he started with horror. It was a dungeon, or rather a place of torture, in which the Moors were wont to confine their worst criminals. There, also, they placed such Christian slaves as had incurred their displeasure. The air was infected by the filth and disease of the wretched inhabitants; and the prisoners themselves were too often of the rudest and most depraved habits, and sought to find relief from their intolerable sufferings by gambling and intoxication.

Here it was that Father Thomas had resolved to spend the remainder of his life; for these poor abandoned wretches, whom no one else regarded except with horror, were in his eyes only so many souls purchased by the precious Blood of Christ, and perishing for want of a pastor's charitable care. No argument could turn him from his purpose; and to the Sagena he was accordingly carried, where, in spite of the shocking character of the place, he quickly regained his strength.

30.

FATHER THOMAS OF JESUS—(*continued*).

em-blem, *a sign.* lib-er-at-ed, *set free.*
ran-som, *the price for which a captive is set free.*

THE life led by Father Thomas in his prison is one hard to describe. He soon found he could do very little to win a hearing from his companions inside

the prison-walls. There nothing was to be heard but oaths and blasphemies, and every word spoken by the Christians to one another was jealously observed. But he watched his time, when they were labouring in the mines or in the fields; and there he always accompanied the other slaves, working by their side, and sharing all their fatigues. By degrees he won their love and confidence; and, during the hour which was allowed them to rest in the middle of the day, he would gather them round him by the sound of a little bell, and speak to them words of kindness, to which they had long been strangers. Then he would show them his crucifix, whilst they crowded round him to kiss the sacred image. Ten, twenty, or thirty years had passed over the heads of some since they had last gazed upon the emblem of their faith; and at the sight there came back to their hearts the thoughts of childhood, of the churches and the olive-hills of Spain, of the prayers they had learnt, the mother at whose knees they had first lisped the name of Jesus, or, it may be, of the day, happy above all other happy days, of their first Communion. With hearts softened by such recollections, they were now ready to listen to the preacher's words; and before long a wonderful change was to be seen in the prisons of the Sagena. Suffering and sickness, indeed, were still there; but prayer and resignation and Christian charity were there also. Father Thomas had become the head of a society which, under his direction, had almost the character of a religious community. His little bell marked the time for work, recreation, and devotion; every day the prisoners assembled to receive his instructions, and then every difference was made up, every disorder corrected. Those who were a little better provided for than others would contribute what they could spare of their food and clothing to a little stock, out

of which Father Thomas supplied the wants of the more destitute. Some who had renounced their faith were regained from their apostasy; and not a few of these sealed their profession with their blood, and died a glorious martyrdom. In short, the Sagena, which had once been the seat of every vice and every misery, was now bringing forth precious fruits of patience, charity, and faith.

Meanwhile the captivity of Father Thomas was bitterly felt by his relations. He belonged to one of the noblest houses of Portugal; and his sister, the Countess of Linares, at last raised the sum of a thousand gold crowns, and sent it to Morocco by the hands of the Spanish ambassador, who was charged to procure his release.

One day, therefore, the Moorish master of the slaves entered the Sagena, and suddenly announced to Father Thomas that he was free, and might go where he pleased. The countess's letter was placed in his hands, eagerly welcoming him back to Portugal, and dwelling with delight on the prospect of their speedy meeting. Every body expected him; the King of Spain was impatient to greet him; honours and fame were awaiting his acceptance; and on the very next day he might embark in the ambassador's vessel, and be borne back to the sunny shores of his native land.

But for none of these things did Father Thomas care. He looked at his captive children, and he felt that he could not leave them. The thousand gold crowns, which were the ransom of a noble, would procure the freedom of two prisoners of inferior rank. He resolved to use the money in setting free two of the most unfortunate of his companions; and when the Spanish vessel left the port of Morocco, *they*, and not Father Thomas, were standing liberated on her deck.

As for him, he went on with his daily work; and when the fourth year of his captivity drew to a close, it found him at his post, working in chains in the mines or at the city-ramparts, surrounded by troops of fellow-sufferers, who formed his miserable but faithful flock. But mind and body were nearly worn out; and when Lent came on, it was plain to all that the Father was drawing near his end. Still he would make no change in his daily life: he preached every day to the prisoners; and as he lay on his straw pallet, exhausted with the labours of the day, he occupied himself in finishing a little book on *The Sufferings of Christ*, which has since become one of the most popular that is used by Catholics, and has been translated into almost every language. Easter came, and on the Monday following the feast, Father Thomas heard, to his inexpressible grief, that two Spanish captives, wearied out with their torments, had consented to abjure their faith. He was then sinking fast; but he commanded that they should be sent for, and in a few minutes they stood by his miserable bed. He caused himself to be raised; and though the hand of death was then on him, his eye grew bright and his voice clear and powerful as he addressed them. I cannot tell you what he said, but his words pierced to their very hearts. They threw themselves on their knees, and with tears declared that they were ready to suffer death itself rather than desert their Lord. He gave them his blessing; and then, with eyes raised to heaven, he lay absorbed in prayer, whilst his children wept around him; for they well knew they were about to lose their father.

There was one watching the scene to whom that moment brought salvation. It was the Moorish slave-master, whose heart was so powerfully touched by what he saw, that at last he moved from the doorway where he had been standing, and casting himself on

his knees beside the dying man, he exclaimed, "My father, I too am a Christian; and before this day's sun has set, I will receive the baptism of faith."

Father Thomas revived as he heard the words. "My God, I thank Thee," he faintly murmured; and sinking back on his couch, he expired.

Eight days afterwards, ships arrived, bringing the ransom of all the Christian captives. They accordingly returned to Spain; but Father Thomas was not with them. He had gone to a better home, to enjoy a truer liberty, and, in the presence of his Lord, to reap the reward of his glorious martyrdom of charity.

Such was the life of a true Christian hero; for the only real heroes are God's chosen saints.

31.

THE CARPENTER AND UPHOLSTERER BEES.

sol-i-ta-ry, *lonely, living alone.*
up-hol-ster-er, *one who furnishes a house.*
scoop, *to dig out.*

When persons speak of the wonderful instinct displayed by bees, they generally think of that particular kind which live together in hives, and from which we obtain our stores of wax and honey. But besides these, there are other kinds of bees that live alone, making their cells or nests in quite a different way from the hive-bee, though in one which is no less singular and worthy of admiration.

Some of these solitary bees are called *carpenters*, and others *upholsterers*. The carpenter-bee makes its nest in old pieces of wood, into which she cuts a long hole about fourteen inches deep. The only tools which she has to help her in her task are two

strong teeth; so you may suppose it occupies her several days. The inside of the cell, when finished, is as smooth as if it had been polished; and when the work is complete, the bee carries off all her chips and sawdust, lest they should point out the situation of her nest to some of her enemies.

She then sets to work to contrive cells inside this hole, in which she may lay her eggs. The way in which she does this is very remarkable. She first lays one egg at the bottom of the shaft or hole, and with it she also lays a ball of *pollen;* that is, of the paste which she makes out of the yellow dust which she procures from the flowers, and which serves for food for the young caterpillar. A partition of clay mixed with the wood-dust is then neatly fastened over the egg, which forms the floor for the second chamber. A second egg is laid in this, with a second ball of pollen. She goes on in this way till the shaft is divided into six or eight chambers, in each of which is an egg, and a supply of pollen for food whenever the egg shall be hatched. The entrance is then carefully stopped up, lest the young grubs should be devoured by birds or insects.

You will ask how the grubs, when hatched, are to make their escape from this strange dwelling. The egg which lies at the bottom, having been laid the earliest, will be the earliest hatched, and will therefore be ready to come out before the others. Were the grub to eat its way through the cells which lie above it, it would in so doing destroy the other eggs; yet how else can it find its way to the surface? The old bee provides against this difficulty. She makes another opening in the piece of wood, which leads like a side passage into the lower cell, and she fills the passage up with very soft paste made out of sawdust, which the grub easily eats through, whilst at *the same time* it looks so like wood, that no one

would discover it from the outside. The grub that is just hatched, therefore, makes its way out by this back-door, and all the others follow in succession, without disturbing the inhabitants of the cells above them.

I think you will allow that the carpenter-bee deserves her name, and shows that she understands her business. Let us now see what there is to be said of her near relation, the upholsterer-bee.

We give the name of upholsterer to tradesmen who furnish houses; and this bee is called by the same name because she has a fancy for hanging her tiny cell with beautiful scarlet curtains. She digs her hole in some earthen bank, and scoops out a pretty little chamber, which is, however, somewhat cold and damp; so she makes it warmer and cleaner by giving it a lining. Sometimes she is contented with using leaves or soft down, but what she likes best are the bright petals of the scarlet poppy. She cuts them out in an oval form, as sharply as you could do with a pair of scissors; then she doubles them up between her legs, and flies home with her treasure. The whole cell is lined with layer after layer of these splendid hangings; and when the chamber is complete, her next work is to lay in a stock of food. She collects a quantity of pollen mixed with honey, with which she fills up about half an inch of her cell. The egg is laid on the top of this layer, and then the ends of the scarlet curtains are folded down over it. The entrance is then carefully stopped up, and the bee leaves her egg to be hatched in the beautiful chamber which she has provided for it.

32.

DESCRIPTIVE GEOGRAPHY. NO. IV.

GERMANY AND BELGIUM.

THE name of Germany is given to a large portion of the centre of Europe, which lies to the east of France, between the Alps and the Baltic Sea. It is not all one country, however, but contains thirty-eight different states and kingdoms. But in all of these the German language is spoken, and they are all leagued together, and are bound to defend one another when attacked by a foreign enemy.

It is not very easy to describe Germany, because the different parts of this large country differ very much in appearance. An immense flat plain extends through all the northern district, which is often barren and sandy; though in some parts the industry of the people renders the soil very productive, and immense crops of corn are raised and exported to other countries. The largest state of Northern Germany is the kingdom of Prussia, the capital of which is Berlin. Several provinces of Western Germany likewise belong to Prussia; they border the river Rhine, which flows to the north for 750 miles from its source in the Swiss Alps to the German Ocean.

The scenery on the banks of the Rhine is very beautiful. The hills rise on either side, sometimes planted with woods and vineyards, sometimes rocky and majestic, and crowned with ruined castles, formerly the residence of the fierce barons of the land. The broad river winds along, covered with boats and vessels, for it is the grand highway of traffic into the heart of Germany. The country bordering the upper part of the Rhine is covered with a vast forest, called the Black Forest; and great quantities of timber are floated down from this forest in huge rafts.

The centre of Germany is very mountainous. If

you look at the map, you will see that Bohemia is quite walled round by mountains, and that some other mountains, called the Hartz Mountains, run through the lower part of Hanover. The largest river in the middle and north of Germany is the Elbe, which rises in the Bohemian mountains, and flows through Saxony and Prussia. Dresden, the capital of Saxony, stands on the Elbe, and has long been celebrated for the beautiful porcelain which is made in its neighbourhood.

The empire of Austria includes several provinces which were formerly independent states, such as Bohemia, Hungary, and the Tyrol. It occupies the whole of the south-east part of Germany, and its capital is Vienna, the gayest of all the German cities. Outside the walls of Vienna are broad streets, mingled with avenues of trees and beautiful public gardens, where the people are fond of walking and amusing themselves; but within the walls the streets are narrow, with tall houses seven or eight stories high, and beautiful palaces on either side. Vienna stands on the river Danube (one of the largest of the European rivers), which rises in the Black Forest, and flows to the east till it falls into the Black Sea. There are many other large and important cities in Germany, such as Hamburgh, which stands on the mouth of the river Elbe, and carries on an extensive trade with this country; Cologne, on the Rhine, celebrated for its magnificent cathedral; Leipsic, in Saxony, where a great fair is held three times a-year, and where more books are bought and sold probably than at any other city in Europe. Each fair lasts for three weeks, during which time the town is full of people of all nations, wearing their various dresses and speaking their different languages. Frankfort-on-the-Maine is another important city, and one of *the largest places* of trade in Europe. Almost all

the German towns are remarkable for their cur
ancient buildings and beautiful cathedrals.
Germans are very fond of music, and almost all
common people can sing well. It is pleasant to l
a troop of labourers coming home from their w
and singing in chorus. They are also a clever
industrious people, and have invented many us
arts, such as those of printing and clockmaking.

The Protestant religion prevails in some of
German states, such as Prussia, Hanover, and o
of the northern divisions; but the people of Aus
and Bavaria are Catholics. In the Tyrol, also,
people are devotedly attached to the faith, and l
fought bravely in its defence.

Belgium is the name now given to a district
merly called Flanders, or the Low Countries, b
the low flat country which extends to the south-
of Holland. It has been subject at different ti
to Spain, Austria, and Holland, but is now an ir
pendent kingdom. Its capital is Brussels, near wl
city the famous battle of Waterloo was fought
1815 between the British and the French. Tl
are several other cities in Belgium, such as Gh
Antwerp, and Bruges, all of which are rende
beautiful and interesting from their fine churc
and other public buildings. The Belgians are
Catholics, and much attached to their relig
They are an industrious and intelligent people,
in former times their cities were the chief seat
European commerce. They are thought some of
best farmers in the world; in fact, every Belgia
a farmer, though sometimes a very small one.
every foot of ground is carefully cultivated with
spade, and by this means large crops are raised;
the people, though not very rich, are all well-fed
well-clothed, and their cottages are for the most
clean and comfortably furnished.

33.

COUNT RODOLPH OF HAPSBURGH.

re-straint, *being kept back.*
at-ti-tude, *position.*
Vi-at-i-cum, *the name given to the Holy Communion when received by the dying.*
mag-nif-i-cence, *grandeur.*
rite, *ceremony.*
re-com-pense, *reward.*

It was a beautiful morning in the spring of the year 1264, and the courtyard of the old castle of Hapsburgh presented a gay and lively spectacle; groups of huntsmen and esquires were to be seen, some holding the reins of noble horses, whilst others were busy with the hounds, who seemed impatient of restraint.

The young Count Rodolph of Hapsburg, one of the noblest lords of Germany, was about to ride forth to the chase, which was that day to take place in a forest some miles distant from his castle. He soon appeared among his followers, and leaping into the saddle, gave the word for the whole company to proceed forwards. What a gallant sight it was, as dogs and horses wound through the forest-glades, which soon echoed with the horns of the huntsmen and the deep baying of their hounds! Rodolph was full of youthful spirit, and entered into the pleasure of a day's sport as readily as any one. Beside him rode his favourite page, to whom he turned now and then, and spoke in the joyousness of his heart.

They had not gone far, when a sound struck on the ear of the count very different from those of which we have spoken. It was the tinkling of a little bell, which at first he took to be a sheep-bell; but as it came gradually nearer and nearer, he guessed, from the regularity with which it sounded, that it was something very different.

You must understand, that in Catholic countries, whenever a priest carries the Blessed Sacrament to the sick, he does so dressed in a surplice and stole, whilst a boy goes before him, carrying a light and ringing a little bell. The object of this is, to show respect to the Adorable Body of our Lord, and also to give notice to the faithful of Its approach, that they may kneel and show It becoming reverence.

Count Rodolph, therefore, understood that the Blessed Sacrament was being carried along the mountain-path by which he was riding, and at once dismounting from his horse, he drew on one side and knelt down, in a lowly and respectful attitude, to let It pass. The priest, preceded by his little attendant, soon came in sight; he was an old man, who filled the office of curate in a neighbouring village, and he was carrying the Viaticum to a poor cottager who lived far among the mountains.

Rodolph could not help contrasting the lowliness of this little procession with the pomp and magnificence of his own retinue. Yielding to a sudden impulse, he approached the priest with head uncovered, and humbly begged that he would mount the horse which he held by the bridle, and suffer him to conduct him on his way. The poor priest hesitated: but the count would admit of no denial; and helping him to mount, he took the bridle in his hand, and gently led the gallant animal along the rugged path, till they reached the cottage of the dying man.

Arrived there, Rodolph and his page knelt down, and devoutly joined in all the prayers that were offered; then, when the solemn rites were over, he again obliged the priest to mount his horse, and led him back to his village, with the same marks of respect as before. When they had reached the priest's house, Rodolph begged him to take the horse and *keep it; for* as to himself, he said, he should never

presume to ride it again, after it had borne his Lord and Redeemer. The old priest was deeply touched.

"Young lord," he said, "thou hast this day loyally served thy Master, and He will not fail to reward thee. Ere nine years have passed over thy head, thou shalt receive the recompense of this thy service."

Nine years passed away, and when they closed, Rodolph of Hapsburgh was chosen Emperor of Germany. He became the founder of an illustrious house, from which many of the sovereigns of Europe are descended; and the present Emperor of Austria still bears the honours which were thus bestowed on his ancestor, in reward of an act of piety and devotion shown towards the Most Holy Sacrament.

34.

AIR.

mo-tion, *a moving.*
es-cape, *to get out, to get away.*
buoy-ant, *apt to float, light.*

If a room has no furniture in it, we commonly speak of it as being empty; yet this is not, strictly speaking, the fact. There is one thing which fills the room from the floor to the ceiling. It is a thing which you cannot see, but it is as real a thing as any piece of furniture which you can see or feel. This thing is *air.*

If you take all your clothes out of the box in which you keep them, you think of the box as having nothing in it; but in reality it is full of air, and when you shut it up and put it away, you put away a box full of air.

Sometimes you play at football. The ball is made of india-rubber; but is that all? What is there inside the india-rubber? Nothing, you will per-

haps answer. Well, let us prick a hole in this ball; it is now good for nothing, yet the india-rubber is there just as it was before. What has the ball lost, therefore, which made it a minute ago so light and buoyant? It was full of air, which escaped through the hole. When you were kicking it about, you were really kicking about some air, shut up inside a case of india-rubber.

Though air is a real thing, you cannot see it, but you can feel it sometimes. You can only feel it, however, when it is in motion; or when, being in motion yourself, you, as it were, run against it. When the wind blows on you, it is the moving air which you feel; and when you fan yourself, you set the air in motion with your hand, and make it strike against your cheek. The air is transparent, like glass; that is to say, it is *clear*, so that we can see through it. When glass gets dirty, you know it becomes less transparent; and so also the air is sometimes less clear than at others, as, for instance, when it is full of mist or fog. Though we cannot see air, we can see what it does when it is in motion. In fact, it does a great deal of work for us which we could not do for ourselves. It blows against our ships, and pushes them through the water. The reason why ships have sails is, in order that there may be a larger surface for the air to blow against, and so the ships may be made to move faster. Have you ever walked with an umbrella open when the wind was blowing at your back? If so, you will remember that the open umbrella caught a great deal of wind, and that the wind seemed to help you along. If you had tried to go against the wind with that umbrella, you would have been scarcely able to get along; for the air, when it is in motion, is much stronger than you are.

Look at the arms of a windmill; it is the air

ıich sets them in motion, and which thus helps to ind our corn. The waving tops of those tall trees, o, are moved by the air: in winter, when the tree bare, it scarcely moves its branches; but how it ·nds when it is full of leaves, and the wind blows rongly against them! The leaves then act like e sails of a ship, and there is more for the air to ·ess against.

When the air moves very fast, we say that there a high wind. The faster the air moves, the more ›wer it has. It is just like striking any thing with a ick: if you want to strike hard, you must move the ick very fast; but if you move it slowly, you will ıly give a gentle touch. The air, when it moves owly, makes only a gentle breeze; but when it oves very fast, we have a gale of wind. You know ıat if I were to toss you a cricket-ball, you would ıtch it in your hand, and it would not hurt you; but ıat same ball, shot from a gun, would strike you ›wn and kill you on the spot. In the first instance, e ball would move slowly, and so would not have uch power; but in the other case it would move ›ry fast indeed, and would thus come with immense rce. And this is why the air, when it moves very st, as it does in a storm of wind, often does so much ischief, tearing tall trees up by their roots, and dash-g great ships upon the rocks.

35.

THE TRUTH.

Why should you fear the truth to tell?
Does falsehood ever do so well?
Can you be satisfied to know
There's something wrong to hide below?
No; let your fault be what it may,
To own it is the happy way.

So long as you your crime conceal,
You cannot light or gladsome feel;
Your heart will ever feel oppressed,
As if a weight were on your breast;
And e'en your mother's eye to meet
Will tinge your face with shame and heat.

36.

A LESSON OF CHARITY.

al-mon-er, *one who gives alms.*
lib-er-al-i-ty, *readiness to give.*
tres-pass-es, *sins, offences.*
re-con-cile, *to cause to agree.*
zeal-ous, *eager, full of zeal.*
con-se-cra-tion, *dedication of a thing to God also means that part of the Mass in w the bread and wine are changed into the l and Blood of Christ.*

MANY hundred years ago, the Church of Alexan in Egypt was governed by a Bishop, who is kn in history by the name of St. John the Almo This name was given him on account of his a deeds and other charities; and many beautiful st are told of the love he showed both to God and r His charity did not merely consist in liberality to poor; he spent his life in every kind of good w and was specially zealous in reconciling those were on bad terms with their neighbours. It pened once that two merchants of Alexandria quarrelled, and one of them refused to forgive even to see, the person who had injured him. Bishop did his best to make peace between th but without success. At last he sent for the r chant who had shown so much want of charity, begged of him as a great favour that he would in the church until he had finished saying M

'here was no one in the church but the merchant, ıe Bishop, and the boy who served his Mass. After ıe Consecration, when they came to the *Our Father*, hich all three were repeating aloud together, the ishop made a sign to his server, and at the words, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that espass against us," they both of them stopped, so ıat the merchant was left to repeat these words one. When he had done so, St. John turned round him and said, "My son, what is it you have dared ask of God? Do you wish that He should forgive ɔu in the same way as you forgive your neighbour?" t these words, spoken at so solemn a moment, the :oud heart of the angry man melted within him; ıd rising from his knees, he ran out of the church, ıd went to seek his enemy. When he had found ım, he led him back to the Bishop, in whose pre- ınce they both embraced as brothers; and from ıat hour, from being enemies, they became firm and ithful friends. Who would dare to nurse a feeling anger or hatred, if he gave one thought to the ords which he repeats so often!

37.

DESCRIPTIVE GEOGRAPHY. NO. V.

SWITZERLAND.

he-re-tic, *one who denies any article of the Catholic faith.*

pop-u-la-tion, *the people of a country.*

gar-land, *a wreath.*

av-a-lanche, *a large mass of snow or ice sliding down a mountain.*

WITZERLAND lies almost in the middle of Europe, ıd is full of mountains. The Alps stretch quite ırough Switzerland into Germany. They reach so into France and Italy, and divide Switzerland *om those countries.* All the highest parts of the

mountains are covered with ice and snow, which often reflect the most beautiful colours: sometimes the light shines upon them so that they seem to be bathed in gold; at other times, when the sun is setting, the snow looks as if it were of the softest rose-colour. The great beds of ice are called Glaciers; some of them are tolerably smooth upon the top, but others are made up of high ridges and deep cracks between them, as if the sea had been suddenly frozen in a great storm with all its waves lifted up. The glaciers are, in fact, great frozen rivers, moving very slowly but continually down the sides of the mountains, and carrying rocks and stones with them to the plain. Their lower part reaches down to the fields and orchards, and ends in a muddy river, fed continually by the melting ice. Terrible destruction is sometimes caused in the Alps by the falling of avalanches. A sound is heard like distant thunder rolling amongst the mountains, and then comes the avalanche, looking like a great cloud of white smoke, as it rushes down, tearing up every thing in its way. But a moment before there were trees and grass, and cattle feeding upon the mountain-side; now all is gone, nothing remains but the bare stony rock. The Swiss, however, do not seem to fear these dangers. There are many sweet green spots upon the mountains where they send their goats and cows and sheep to feed during the summer; and the day on which they are driven up to the mountain-pasture is quite a merry holiday. The people put on their best clothes, with gay ribbons and nosegays, and garlands of flowers are hung on the horns of the cows. Some of the farmer's family go up to live on the mountains while the cattle are there, to milk the goats and cows, and to make cheese and butter; they live there in little houses made of logs of wood, and there are small bridges which cross from one

point of the mountains to another. The cows are as clever in climbing as their masters. The country people in Switzerland build their houses with galleries outside, in which it is pleasant to sit in fine weather; and the roof comes far beyond the walls, that it may shelter them from the snow. The villages are generally surrounded by fields and orchards; and the valleys which lie between the mountains are very fruitful. Some of them, too, have beautiful lakes; one of the most beautiful of these is the Lake of Geneva.

St. Francis of Sales was Bishop of Geneva, and his body is preserved in the Church of Annecy, where he died. He is said to have converted a hundred thousand Swiss heretics to the Catholic faith.

All the Swiss, however, are not heretics; there are several *cantons*, or provinces, in which the entire population is Catholic, and where the people have suffered much rather than abandon their faith.

Berne is the chief town of Switzerland; it stands on a hill which juts forward to the river Aar. This and several other rivers flow down from the Alps; the most famous of them all is the beautiful Rhine, which runs through Switzerland, and then along the western side of Germany, and so enters Holland, where it divides itself into several streams, and flows into the sea. The Swiss women wear very gay fanciful dresses: each part of the country has its own particular dress; but almost every where they let their hair fall down their backs in long plaits, even when they are old women, and the hair is quite gray.

The men are very clever in carving wood; and in every village you come to, you find many pretty specimens of this work offered for sale—boxes with bunches of the Alpine rose, a small kind of rhododendron, carved on their lids, paper-knives, salad spoons and forks, nut-crackers, figures of their cows and *goats, and* models of their cottages.

38.

CHRISTMAS-DAY.

na-tiv-i-ty, *birth.* in-scribed, *cut in stone.*

EVERY one feels that Christmas is a time of joy. "A merry Christmas and a happy New Year" is the phrase with which English people are accustomed to greet one another as a matter of course on Christmas morning; and all, both young and old, feel that it is, what indeed it ought to be, a great and happy holiday. But we who are the children of the Church know that her holidays are all holy days; and we ought to know the meaning of all these holy days, and understand why, as each comes round, we have ceremonies and devotions which we have not on other days. Christmas-Day is a happy holiday to us, because it is the birthday of our Lord Jesus Christ. You know that we all keep the birthdays of those we love; and we like to have our own birthday kept, and to have presents made us, and kind things said to us on that day.. Just in the same way does the Church on this day keep the birthday of her Lord. And the green boughs and bright holly with which we deck our altars on Christmas morning is like putting on some gay holiday-dress.

It is not necessary to relate over again the history of our Lord's birth; you have already read it in the course of the "Scripture Stories." But it will be well to see in what way the ceremonies of the Church at this season are intended to put us in mind of the great event which she then celebrates.

In the first place, we prepare for this great feast during four weeks beforehand, to which we give the name of *Advent.* This word means "the coming," because we are then looking forward, as it were, to *he coming of* our Lord. He came to us when He

as born at Bethlehem eighteen hundred years ago; ut we know that He will also come a second time judge both the living and the dead, and this is e reason why at the very same time that we prepare to keep His nativity, we also look forward to His second coming at the awful day of judgment. n each of the Advent weeks, two days are kept as *asting-days*, as well as the day before the feast itself, hich we call Christmas-Eve. This word *Christmas*, hich is given in England to the Feast of our Lord's Nativity, means simply *Christ's Mass*. There are everal other feasts which are named in this way fter the Mass of the day, as Michael-mas, or the Mass of St. Michael; and Candle-mas, which is so alled because on that day candles are blessed, and arried in procession before Mass. And so in the ame way we speak of Christ-mas.

On this great feast, some things are done which re not done on any other day. On other feast-days, priest only says Mass *once*, but on Christmas-Day e says Mass *three times*. It was formerly the custom o do this on some other very great festivals, such as Easter, to show their dignity and importance; but it s now only done at Christmas, and the first of the hree Masses is said as near midnight as possible, ecause it was at that time that our Lord's birth ook place. The Gospel of the Midnight Mass, accordingly, relates the history of His birth in the table; then follows the Mass at break of day, when he Gospel tells us of the angels appearing to the hepherds, and of their coming to adore their newborn Lord. The third Mass is at the usual hour, nd both the Epistle and Gospel of this Mass declare who our divine Saviour really was—even the only-begotten Son of God, the *Word made Flesh*, who came s on this day to dwell among us. In Rome, before he *Pope says his* Midnight Mass, the relics of the

manger in which our Lord was laid are carried in solemn procession round the church, which is lit up with thousands of candles. These relics are then left exposed during eight days, that all the faithful, during the Christmas festival, may behold the very wood which formed the hard cradle of the Holy Child.

In some churches, it is also the custom during Christmas to make a sort of picture or representation of His birth in the poor stable of Bethlehem. The manger, with the ox and the ass feeding beside it, St. Joseph, our Blessed Lady, and her Divine Infant, are all represented, with the shepherds kneeling and adoring our Lord as He lies among the straw. This is called a *crib;* and the object is to make the whole story of the Nativity more familiar to us, that we may realise the poverty and humility with which He deigned to appear amongst us, and that thus our hearts may be filled with love and thankfulness.

The stable of Bethlehem still exists, but it has been turned into a church, and its walls and floor have been cased in costly marbles. It is a grotto, cut out of the solid rock; and, as it has no windows to let in the daylight, it is lighted by two-and-thirty gold and silver lamps, which are all the gifts of Christian kings and princes. A piece of white marble, incrusted with jasper, and set in a circle of silver, is let into the floor, marking the exact spot where our Lord was born, and around it are inscribed these words in Latin:

"Jesus Christ was born here of the Virgin Mary."

In front of this holy spot is the great marble altar, and another altar equally beautiful is placed just opposite to the place where formerly stood the manger. And here pilgrims from all parts of the Christian world come to venerate the sacred scene of Christ's nativity. Let us worship with them in

spirit; and on this great Festival beg Him who was this day born among us as a little child, to make us children in innocence of heart and holy simplicity.

39.

STORIES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY. NO. III.

ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY.

di-ver-sions, *amusements.*
va-cant, *empty.*
con-sis-tent, *standing with, or agreeable to.*

In the year 1154 the English throne was filled by King Henry II., a descendant of William the Conqueror, and the first of our English princes who bore the name of Plantagenet. He was a rich and powerful monarch, and reigned over a great part of France as well as over England and Ireland. His court was the most brilliant in Europe; but among all the knights and nobles who thronged to it, there was none who won so much of his favour as a young Englishman whose name was Thomas à Becket. His father was a London merchant, and he himself had been educated for the priesthood. But he was not yet ordained a priest, and his position at the king's court was rather that of a minister of state than an ecclesiastic. In the year that Henry became king, he made his favourite minister lord chancellor of the kingdom. This was a very high dignity, and Becket's household was the most magnificent in the land. He was so frank and hospitable, so handsome in person, and so eloquent in speech, that every one admired him. There seemed nothing which he could not do, and do well; and he showed himself as brave in the field of battle as he was wise in council, or witty at the royal banquet-table. The king could not bear to be without him, and lived with him on

terms of the closest friendship. Sometimes Henry would ride into the chancellor's great dining-hall, as he sat at table with his guests, and amuse himself by making his horse leap over the dining-tables. At other times they might be seen hunting and hawking together, and sometimes playing pranks one with another, like two schoolboys. One day, as the king and his chancellor were riding through the streets of London, they saw a poor man by the way-side half-clothed and shivering with the cold. "Poor fellow," said Becket, "it would be a charity to give him a good warm cloak to cover him." "That is well thought of," replied Henry; "and you, my lord chancellor, shall have the merit of the act." So saying, he laid hold of the chancellor's gay cloak, which was trimmed with costly fur, and tried to pull it from his shoulders. Becket resisted, and they were near pulling one another from their horses in the struggle; but at last the king got possession of the cloak, and gave it to the beggar, who went away well pleased with the royal present.

From these stories, some will think that Becket was nothing but a courtier and man of the world; but they would be greatly mistaken. Under this gay and brilliant exterior, he led a holy and mortified life; he kept free from all the vices of those around him, and his heart was as pure and innocent as in the first days of childhood.

King Henry II. had many great qualities; but, like all the Norman kings, he wished to make his power supreme over the Church as well as over the state. He thought if he were to make Becket Archbishop of Canterbury, he would be sure to help him in this design; and so, when that see became vacant, he got the Canterbury monks to elect his chancellor as their Archbishop. Becket begged the king *not to insist* on his accepting this new office; but

Henry would not hear of his refusal, and he was consecrated Archbishop in 1161. It was soon observed that the life of the new Archbishop was quite unlike that he had hitherto led. His splendid household was dismissed; he was no longer seen richly dressed and mounted, and following the gay diversions of a courtly noble: but instead of this, men heard that he said Mass daily, and divided his time between prayer and the duties of his new office. His very first act had been to resign the chancellorship; for, he said, one office was as much as he could find strength to bear.

King Henry did not understand the change; and events soon happened which showed him that he had altogether mistaken the character of St. Thomas. He demanded from his Bishops and clergy a promise that they would observe certain customs introduced by the former kings; and to these customs he added others, which, if they had been followed, would have made the Church entirely subject to the power of the crown. Now the Church is a Divine institution, and is ruled by Divine laws, and her ruler and head is the Pope, who is Vicar of Christ. No king has any right or power to interfere in things spiritual, for he is the head, not of the Church, but of the state.

When, therefore, King Henry made these demands on the English clergy, St. Thomas replied in their name, that they would keep all the customs of the realm, but only in so far as was consistent with the laws of God and the Church. This was the beginning of a great struggle between the king and the Archbishop, which lasted during many years, and in which the object of the king was to force St. Thomas to give up the rights and independence of the Church. But this he bravely refused to do; and though the king seized his lands and drove him into

exile, and banished all his friends and supporters, the saint never yielded, but suffered all things gladly and cheerfully, for the cause which he defended was that of Holy Church.

At last the king found himself forced to give way, and St. Thomas was allowed to come back to England and resume his office. The people gave him a warm welcome, for they loved him dearly for his brave defence of their liberties and those of the Church; but some of the king's party complained that he acted just as boldly as he had done before, and that he showed no inclination to be more submissive to the wishes of the king. Henry was then in Normandy, and the Archbishop's enemies went over to him there, and laid their complaints before him. In a violent rage, the king exclaimed, "Have I no one in all my court who will rid me of this insolent priest?" And as he said this, he looked at his knights, who stood around him ready to do any thing by which they might win his favour.

There were some who were quick enough to guess his meaning, and four of them agreed together to set out at once for England, and to seek out the Archbishop in order to put him to death.

They reached Canterbury on the morning of the 29th of December 1170; and entering the presence of St. Thomas, they seated themselves rudely on the floor before him, and began to urge him to submit unconditionally to all the king's wishes. The Archbishop answered them firmly and yet calmly. He well knew how the matter would end, and had resolved to shed the last drop of his blood in defence of the Church's liberties. "It is in vain, my lords," he said, "that you urge me thus. I fled once from danger, but I will never fly again. I am ready to stand with you, foot to foot, in this quarrel; for it is the *cause*, not of man, but of God." Then they

broke out of the chamber, and began to arm themselves; and the terrified monks came to St. Thomas, begging him to fly and save himself while there was yet time. But he refused to stir; and seeing that the hour of Vespers was come, he bade them all go into the choir, whither he also followed.

The winter's evening was fast closing in, when the knights, in full armour, and with drawn weapons, burst into the cathedral-church. "Where is the traitor?" cried one; "where is the Archbishop?" "Here," answered St. Thomas, in a clear and determined voice, "is the Archbishop, but no traitor." They tried to drag him from the church, but he would not move. "I am ready to die," he said, "for God and Holy Church, in defence of whose liberties I gladly shed my blood." Then Sir Reginald Fitzurse struck him on the head with his heavy sword, and the saint sank upon his knees, while the blood from the wound streamed down his face. "To God and our Lady, and the Patron Saints of this church," he exclaimed, "I commend myself and the Church's cause." A second blow dashed him to the pavement, which was scattered over with his brains; and the glorious martyr gave up his soul to God on the spot where are still shown the traces of the bloody deed.

Two years after his murder, he was canonised by Pope Alexander III.; and later, his relics were placed in a stately shrine within the cathedral-church. Thither flocked pilgrims from every part of Christendom. And though the shrine has long since been torn away, and the holy relics scattered to the winds, the traveller may still see the steps worn away by the countless multitudes who came from distant lands to invoke the intercession of St. Thomas of Canterbury.

40.

A CURIOUS INSTRUMENT.

sal-u-ta-tions, *greetings.* as-cer-tain, *to find out.*
ac-cu-ra-cy, *correctness.* con-jec-ture, *a guessing.*
ex-ter-nal, *outside.* in-ter-nal, *inside.*

A GENTLEMAN, just returned from a journey to London, was surrounded by his children, eager, after the first salutations were over, to hear the news, and to see the contents of a small portmanteau, which were, one by one, carefully displayed to view. After distributing amongst them a few small presents, the father took his seat again, saying, that he must confess he had brought from town, for his own use, something far more curious and valuable than any of the little gifts they had received. It was, he said, too good to present to any of them; but he would, if they pleased, first give them a brief description of it, and then perhaps they might be allowed to inspect it.

The children were accordingly all attention, while the father thus proceeded: "This small instrument displays the most perfect ingenuity of construction, as well as great beauty of workmanship: from its extreme delicacy, it is so liable to injury, that a sort of light curtain, adorned with a beautiful fringe, is always provided, and so placed as to fall in a moment on the approach of the slightest danger. Its external appearance is always more or less beautiful; yet in this respect there is a great diversity in the different sorts: but the internal contrivance is the same in all of them, and is so extremely curious, and its powers so truly astonishing, that no one who considers it can suppress his surprise and admiration. By a slight movement, which

is easily effected by the person it belongs to, you can ascertain the size, colour, shape, weight, and value of any article whatever. A person possessed of one is thus saved the necessity of asking a thousand questions, and trying a variety of troublesome experiments, which would otherwise be necessary; and such a slow and laborious process would, after all, not succeed half so well as a single application of this admirable instrument."

George. If they are such very useful things, I wonder that every body, that can at all afford it, does not have one.

Father. They are not so uncommon as you may suppose; I myself happen to know several persons who are possessed of one or two of them.

Charles. How large is it, father? could I hold it in my hand?

F. You might: but I should be very sorry to trust mine with you.

G. You will be obliged to take very great care of it, then?

F. Indeed I must; I intend every night to enclose it within the small screen I mentioned; and it must besides occasionally be washed in a certain colourless fluid kept for the purpose; but this is such a delicate operation, that persons, I find, are generally unwilling to perform it. But, notwithstanding the tenderness of this instrument, you will be surprised to hear that it may be darted to a great distance, without the least injury, and without any danger of losing it.

C. Indeed? and how high can you dart it?

F. I should be afraid of telling you to what a distance it will reach, lest you should think I am jesting with you.

G. Higher than this house, I suppose?

F. Much higher.

C. Then how do you get it again?

F. It is easily brought down by a gentle movement that does it no injury.

G. But who can do this?

F. The person whose business it is to take care of it.

C. Well, I cannot understand you at all; but do tell us, father, what it is chiefly used for.

F. Its uses are so various, that I know not which to specify. It has been found very serviceable in making out old manuscripts. It will help us greatly in gaining all kinds of knowledge; and without it, some of the most sublime parts of creation would have been matters of mere conjecture. It must be confessed, however, that very much depends on a proper use of it; for many persons appear to have no just sense of its value, but employ it only for the most low and common purposes, without even thinking of the noble uses for which it is designed. It is, indeed, in order to excite in your minds some higher sense of its value than you might otherwise have entertained, that I am giving you this previous description.

G. Well, then, tell us something more about these curious instruments. What colour are they?

F. They vary considerably in this respect.

C. What colour is yours?

F. I believe it is of a darkish colour; but, to confess the truth, I never saw it in my life.

Both. Never saw it in your life!

F. No, nor do I wish to do so; but I have seen a picture of it, which is so exact, that my curiosity is quite satisfied.

G. But why don't you look at the thing itself?

F. I should be in great danger of losing it, if I did.

C. Then you could buy another.

F. Nay, I believe I could not prevail upon any body to part with such a thing.

G. Then how did you get this one?

F. I am so fortunate as to be possessed of more than one; but how I got them I really cannot recollect.

C. Not recollect! why, you said you brought them from London to-night.

F. So I did; I should be sorry if I had left them behind me.

C. Tell, father, do tell us the name of this curious instrument.

F. It is called—an EYE.

41.

BIRDS' NESTS.

con-struc-tion, *the way in which a thing is made.*
for-ti-fi-ca-tion, *a defence.*
de-tec-tion, *the finding out what is secret.*
in-ge-ni-ous, *clever in contriving.*
can-o-py, *a covering overhead.*

THERE are few things in nature which are better worth our examination than birds' nests, displaying as they do, in their variety of form and construction, the tender care of that all-wise Creator, who has given to each bird the instinct which enables it to choose what is best suited to its wants and habits, and most fitted to secure the safety of its young.

There are no two kinds of birds which build their nests exactly in the same manner. If those thoughtless boys who so often rob and destroy birds' nests in their sport, were to spend five minutes in examining the nests they have taken, they would

find much to wonder at and to admire in the variety and beauty of their construction. The birds which build the earliest in the spring require, of course, a warmer nest than others. The blackbird and thrush are among the very first to lay their eggs, and their nests are often completed before the end of February. The blackbird's nest is covered on the outside with moss, sticks, and grass, and lined with fine dry grass in the inside; but as this does not make the nest sufficiently warm for the purpose required, the bird places between the outside and inside a coat of mud-plaster. Some, perhaps, will think this a singular material to choose; but experiments have been made which clearly prove that the bird could not have made a better selection. Her object is to keep in the warmth of the interior of the nest, and she therefore requires to have its walls built of some material which will not readily allow heat to pass through it. Substances of this kind are called *non-conductors*, and it is known that clay or mud is one of the best non-conductors that exist. Cottages, the walls of which are built of mud, are therefore far warmer than those built of stone or brick; and the blackbird's nest is, in fact, a little mud-cottage.

The magpie takes great pains in choosing the site for her nest. She generally builds in the very thickest part of some thorny bush, and surrounds her nest with a perfect fortification of brambles. Outside she arranges a number of twisted hawthorn-branches, with their sharp thorns projecting outwards; whilst the inside is lined with hair and wool, which the saucy bird often plucks from the backs of the sheep as they graze in the fields, accompanying her theft with a wonderful deal of chattering. When the nest is finished, she raises a strong bushy canopy over it composed of the sharpest thorns *closely twisted* together, and a very small hole is

left, to go in and out of. The whole forms a defence against any attack from stronger birds of prey.

The martin collects soft mud, with which she plasters her nest very cleverly, mixing some very small bits of straw with the mud, which makes the walls more close and solid. But there is a danger lest these soft walls should pull themselves down by their own weight; so the prudent little bird has the forbearance not to work too fast, *but only to build in the morning*, leaving her work during the afternoon to dry and harden. When she has laid on one layer of mud about half an inch thick, she lets it harden before she brings another; and so by degrees, in about ten or twelve days, she finishes her house, which is very snug and warm, lined inside with feathers, and having a tiny door near the top. Whilst she is building, she holds on by her claws to the wall where her nest is fixed, and works with her beak; and as each bit of mud is laid on, she plasters it smooth with her chin.

The nests of goldfinches and linnets are deservedly admired for their elegance and neatness, but perhaps the most beautiful of all is that of the common wren. It varies in material according to the colour of the substance against which it is built. Thus, if the nest be placed in a thick ivy-bush, it is built of green moss; but if it be fixed to some lighter branches, the outside is covered with those gray lichens which are found growing on the branches of trees. The titmouse, again, covers her nest with these gray lichens, so that the whole surface sparkles as if it were coated with silver; and the inside is lined with such a profusion of soft downy feathers, that it seems as though the young birds would really be smothered. But the most curious part of this nest is the way in which it is fixed in the tree. It is *closely* woven round some branch, in such a

way that it is impossible to remove the nest without first breaking off the branch with it. Altogether we may safely venture to say, that a more ingenious or more beautiful work of art than the nest of the titmouse is rarely to be seen.

There is another British bird, known by the name of the *water-ouzel*, which chooses the position of its nest with extraordinary skill. This bird, if attacked, will escape by dropping into the water, and diving beneath the surface; and to enable her to do this, she builds her nest close to some pond or stream. A well-known writer on the habits of birds thus describes one of these nests. It was placed upon a stone, projecting from a sort of promontory which overhung a deep pool in the brook. The front of the nest rose immediately from the face of the stone, in such a way that any thing falling from it must drop into the stream. It was made of moss twined with part of a live bramble; and to aid the deception, bits of the stem of a dead bramble had been laid on the top, as if they had fallen there by accident, but in reality they were so fastened to the structure as to make the whole look like a little rise in the ground. The nest had no lining, and its bottom was the bare stone, on which the eggs were laid; and here, in this snug patch of deception, the young brood was reared. The road passed close to the spot, and many persons were daily going to and fro within a few yards; yet the skilful choice of arrangement and colour perfectly secured the nest from detection.

We must add a few words about another bird, which is not to be seen in England, but which is found in Australia, and has obtained the name of the *bower-bird*, from its curious habit of building a sort of playground or bower, seemingly for its own pleasure and amusement, in the neighbourhood of

nest. The bower is formed of twigs woven
gether so as to meet above, and it is decorated
th every brilliant article that the bird can find.
ells, bones, the gay feathers of parrots, and bits
smart-coloured silk or rag, are all stuck in among
e twigs or strewn at the entrance of the bower.
nd when it is finished, the birds may be seen fly-
g in and out of this strange drawing-room, and
eming, by a thousand antics and gestures, to ex-
ess their delight and admiration.

We should never have done, were we to speak of
the varieties of construction displayed by these
eatures. One chooses a hole in the ground, ano-
er a crevice in a tree. The gray fly-catcher lines
r nest with cobwebs; the bullfinch chooses very
e roots; and the golden-crested wren weaves moss
d spiders' webs together, till it produces a texture
fine and delicate as any that the hand of man can
itate. And whenever we examine into the reason
these varieties, we find that the instinct of the
rd has been directed to choose exactly that posi-
n and that material which is best adapted to its
nts. How loudly and sweetly do these winged
eatures seem to tell us that "the hand that made
em is Divine;" and how often will an examination
these beauties of nature remind us of the words
our Lord, "Are not two sparrows sold for a
thing? and yet not one of them falleth to the
ound without my Father."

42.

THE SPARROW'S NEST.

NAY, only look what I have found!
A sparrow's nest upon the ground;
A sparrow's nest, as you may see,
Blown out of yonder old elm-tree.

And what a medley thing it is!
I never saw a nest like this,—
Not neatly wove, with decent care,
Of silvery moss and shining hair;

But put together, odds and ends,
Picked up from enemies and friends,—
See, bits of thread, and bits of rag,
Just like a little rubbish-bag.

There is a scrap of red and brown,
Like the old washerwoman's gown;
And here is muslin, pink and green,
And bits of calico between.

She never thinks, that lady fair,
As she goes by with mincing air,
How the pert sparrow, overhead,
Has robbed her gown to make his bed.

See, hair of dog, and fur of cat,
And ravellings of a worsted mat,
And shreds of silk, and many a feather,
Compacted cunningly together.

Well, here has hoarding been, and hiving,
And not a little good contriving,
Before a home of peace and ease
Was fashioned out of things like these.

Think, had these odds and ends been brought
To some wise man renowned for thought,
Some man of men the very gem,
Pray, what could he have done with them?

If we had said, "Here, sir, we bring
You many a little worthless thing,
Just bits and scraps so very small,
That they have scarcely size at all;

And out of these you must contrive
A dwelling large enough for five,
Neat, warm, and snug, with comfort stored,
Where five small things may lodge and board."

How would the man of learning vast
Have been astonished and aghast,
And vowed that such a thing had been
Ne'er heard of, thought of, much less seen!

Ah, man of learning, you are wrong,
Instinct is more than wisdom strong;
And He who made the sparrow, taught
This skill beyond your reach of thought.

43.

SAYING AND DOING.

en-deav-our-ing, *trying.*
sup-press, *to keep down.*
the-o-ry, *a plan existing only in the mind.*
re-served, *kept back.*

NE evening during the holidays, Frank, a tall hool-boy, amused his younger brother Harry by ading an essay which had gained him the first ize at school. The subject was *Self-Denial.* rank was a clever lad, and had done his task very ell. He represented his subject in so striking a ght, that it made a considerable impression on the ind of his young hearer; and as soon as he had ished, Harry thanked him for his good advice, d expressed a determination of endeavouring to ofit by it. "I am afraid," said he, "I have never arned to deny myself as I ought; but I hope, rank, that I shall not forget this lesson of yours, d I wish you would give me some more good hints the subject."

Now Frank, not considering that this was the best possible compliment that could be paid to his composition, felt disappointed that, instead of praising the force of his arguments or the graces of his style, he should begin to moralise about it; and it confirmed him in a favourite opinion of his, that his brother Harry had not a spark of *genius*.

Harry repeated his request; but finding his brother more inclined to talk of the merits of his essay than to draw any practical improvement from it, he contented himself with his own private resolutions. "To-morrow," said he to himself,—"to-morrow morning I will begin. But why not begin to-night?" The clock had just struck, and Harry recollected that his mother had desired them not to sit up a minute after the clock struck nine. He reminded his brother of this order. "Never mind," said Frank; "here's a famous fire, and I shall stay and enjoy it." "Yes," said Harry, "here's a famous fire, and I should like to stay and enjoy it; but that would not be self-denial, would it, Frank?" "Nonsense!" said Frank; "I shall not stir yet, I promise you." "Then good night to you," said Harry.

Six o'clock was the time at which Harry was expected to rise; but not unfrequently, since the cold weather set in, he had indulged an hour longer. When it struck six the next morning, he started up; but the air felt so frosty, that he had a strong inclination to lie down again. "But no," thought he; "here is a fine opportunity for self-denial;" and up he jumped without further hesitation.

"Frank, Frank," said he to his sleeping brother, "past six o'clock, and a fine starlight morning."

"Let me alone," cried Frank, in a cross drowsy voice. "Very well, then; a pleasant nap to you," said Harry; and down he ran as gay as a lark.

After finishing his Latin exercise, he had time

to take a pleasant walk before breakfast this morning; so that he came in fresh and rosy, with a good appetite, and, what was still better, in a good humour.

But poor Frank, who had just tumbled out of bed when the bell rang for prayers, came down, looking pale, and cross, and cold, and discontented. Harry, who, if he had no genius, had some sly drollery of his own, was just beginning to rally him on his forlorn appearance, when he recollected his resolution. "Frank does not like to be laughed at, especially when he is cross," thought he; so he suppressed his joke: and it requires some self-denial even to suppress a joke.

During breakfast, his father promised that if the weather continued fine, Harry should ride out with him before dinner on the gray pony. Harry was much delighted with this proposal, and the thought of it occurred to him very often during the business of the morning. The sun shone cheerily in at the parlour-windows, and seemed to promise fair for a fine day. About noon, however, it became rather cloudy, and Harry was somewhat startled to perceive a few large drops upon the flag-stones in the court; he nevertheless put on his great-coat at the time appointed, and stood playing with his whip in the hall, waiting to see the horses led out. His mother now passing by, said, "My dear boy, I am afraid there can be no riding this morning; do you see that the stones are quite wet?" "Dear mother," said Harry, "you surely do not imagine that I am afraid of a few drops of rain! Besides, I don't believe it rains at all now." "It seems to me to be coming up very heavy from the south," said his mother. "It will be no more than a shower, at any rate," replied Harry. Just then his father came in; who looked first at the clouds, then at Harry, and shook his head.

"You intend to go, papa, don't you?" said Harry.

"I must go, I have business to do; but I believe, Harry, it will be better for you to stay at home this morning," said his father.

"But, sir," repeated Harry, "do you think it possible, now, that this little sprinkling of rain should do me the least harm in the world, with my great coat, and all?" "Yes, Harry," said his father, "I do think that even this sprinkling of rain may do you harm, as you have not been quite well; I think, too, it will be more than a sprinkling. But you shall decide on this occasion for yourself. I know you have some self-command. I shall only tell you that your going this morning would make your mother uneasy, and that we both think it improper. Now choose for yourself."

Harry again looked at the clouds, at the stones, at his boots, and last of all, at his kind mother; and then he recollected himself. "This," thought he, "is the best opportunity for self-denial that I have had to-day;" and he immediately ran out to tell Roger that he need not saddle the gray pony.

"I should like another half, I think, mother," said Frank that day at dinner, just as he had despatched a large piece of mince-pie.

"Any more for you, my dear Harry?" said his mother.

"If you please—no, thank you, though," said Harry, withdrawing his plate; "for," thought he, "I have had enough, and more than enough, to satisfy my hunger; and now is the time for self-denial."

"Brother Harry," said his little sister, after dinner, "when will you show me how to do that pretty puzzle? you said you would a long time ago."

"I am busy now, child," said Harry; "don't tease me now, there's a good girl." She said no more, but looked disappointed, and still hung upon

her brother's chair. "Come, then," said he, suddenly recollecting himself; "bring me your puzzle;" and laying down his book, he very good-naturedly showed his little sister how to place it.

That night, when the two boys were going to bed, Harry called to mind, with some complacency, the several instances in the course of the day in which he had succeeded in exercising self-denial; and he was on the very point of counting them up to his brother Frank. "But no," thought he, "here is another opportunity still of denying myself; I will not say a word about it; besides, to boast of it, would be to lose all that I have gained during the day." We shall not trouble our readers with all the wise reflections which Harry made on the events of this day; nor will we undertake to say that, during every succeeding one, he kept his resolution with equal constancy. But he had learnt one or two things, which it will be well for us to learn and remember also: that there is a great difference between *theory* and *practice*, that is, between talking well about a thing and doing it in earnest; that self-denial is not so hard as it seems at first sight, but has a wonderful sweetness in it; and lastly, that it is one of those virtues which must not be reserved for great occasions only, but which is wanted every day, and almost every hour.

44.

LET NOT THE SUN GO DOWN UPON YOUR WRATH.

See, behind the crimson west
Brightly sinks the sun to rest;
Gently close the drooping flowers,
Softly fall the evening hours;
Hush'd is every woodland note,
Bee's loud hum and linnet's throat;

Silent is the liquid breeze,
Moonbeams kiss the rustling trees.
Ere the loving stars arise,
Ere soft slumber seals your eyes,—
Children, bid contentions cease;
Let the sun go down in peace.

Join not hymns of praise to learn,
While your hearts with anger burn;
Kneel not to your evening prayer
With resentment lurking there.
God, who bids you dwell in love—
God, who sees you from above—
He is grieved your pride to see,
Every time you disagree.
Ere the silver stars arise,
Ere soft slumber seals your eyes,—
Children, bid your quarrels cease;
Let the sun go down in peace.

45.

SALT.

com-pon-ent, *composing, or making up.*
par-ti-cles, *very small parts.*
sub-ter-ra-ne-an, *underground.*
va-ri-e-ties, *different kinds.*
fla-vour, *taste.*
di-men-sions, *size, measurement.*

THE several varieties of this useful mineral de their names from the particular situation in w they are formed. Thus we have sea-salt, rock- and fountain-salt; but all possess the same perties, and are formed of the same compo parts. To some it will appear strange that a stance which possesses so agreeable a flavour as

should be made up of two things in themselves most unpalatable, namely, *soda* and *muriatic acid;* but it often happens that when two substances are combined or mixed together, they acquire taste, colour, smell, and other properties perfectly different to what either of them previously possessed; and this is the case with the materials of that substance to which we give the name of *salt.*

It is one of those natural productions which exist in the greatest abundance; and, in some state or other, it is to be found in every part of the world. As we all know, it mingles in large quantities in the waters of the sea, which may be called the largest salt-mine in existence; for it has been calculated that one-thirtieth part of that great mass of liquid is formed of salt. In some countries, there are likewise springs and lakes of salt-water; of which, perhaps, the most famous is the Dead Sea, in the land of Palestine. A large tract to the west of the Caspian abounds in salt lakes and deserts; and in Africa also they are very numerous.

A salt lake is generally formed by the water of some salt spring or river flowing into it. As the purer part of the water is carried off by evaporation, the salt is left behind; and thus the waters which remain in the bed of the lake become filled with saline particles, and generally contain a much larger proportion than is found in the waters of the ocean.

These springs and streams themselves obtain their saline properties from passing through subterranean masses of salt; for vast beds of this mineral are often found lying in the earth. Thus, at Northwich, in Cheshire, there are salt-mines of great depth and extent; in Spain, there is a mountain of salt, nearly 500 feet high; and another, equally large, in India: and the salt that is found in these

mines is called *rock-salt*, to distinguish it from that which is obtained from sea-water.

The most extraordinary salt-mines that exist are those in the neighbourhood of Cracow, in Poland, which were first opened in the year 1251, and have been constantly worked ever since without appearing likely to be exhausted. The descent into these mines is through six shafts, or wells, which are dug straight down through a mass of pure crystallised salt. To one not used to such expeditions, the passage underground appears somewhat perilous. A sort of square seat is formed by means of twisted cordage, which is fastened to a strong thick rope; and the travellers, having taken their seats, are let gently down into the heart of the mine by means of a wheel, round which the great rope runs.

At the depth of about 700 feet, you reach the bottom of the shaft, and find yourself in a high vaulted hall, from which six large passages or aisles run out in different directions. Torches are then lighted, which, as their reflections flash from the glittering sides of the mines, give out a lustre as of countless precious jewels. As you proceed on your way, you pass through galleries and chambers of ample dimensions, all cut out of the sparkling salt, which is as hard as the living rock, and perfectly dry. Here and there, columns are left to support the roof, some of which have been worked and carved with considerable skill; and besides the chambers in which the salt is dug out, in huge masses weighing 600 or 700 pounds, there are others which are set apart for stables, or for the use of the workmen; and several beautiful chapels, where, at certain times, Mass is said. The following is the description of one of these chapels given by a modern traveller: "The first object worthy of notice," he says, "is a magnificent altar, cut out of the purest

rock-salt, and ornamented with four columns about ten feet high, perfectly clear and transparent. They are sculptured all round with grapes, vine-leaves, and other emblems; on the right side of the chapel is a large crucifix, beautifully finished; on the left, the image of a saint in prayer, from the hand of the same sculptor. Three steps lead to the altar, which is adorned with exquisite vases, all of salt; whilst more than thirty lights are arranged around it, giving it a dazzling and splendid appearance."

Some of the chambers are fifty, sixty, and some even eighty feet high; and in one part there is a large staircase, of a hundred steps, entirely cut out of the salt, each step being fifteen feet in width.

At the bottom of this singular mine, there runs a spring of fresh water, which finds its way through some part of the mountain which is free from the veins of salt, and thus supplies all the wants of the poor miners and their horses. Many hundreds of these horses never see the light of day from the hour when they are first let down into the mine.

The large salt-mine at Soowar, in Hungary, is almost as remarkable as that we have just described; and here also may be seen a chapel, large enough to contain a hundred people, with an altar, pulpit, chairs, forms, and adjoining sacristy, all cut out of the solid sparkling salt. Mass is celebrated here during the week after the Epiphany, when all the miners and officers of excise are bound to attend.

Our English salt-mines cannot be compared, in point of extent, to those we have been describing; yet they have much the same character; and when the long aisles are lighted up by candles and torches fastened to the walls, the scene reminds us of the enchanted palaces of some fairy-tale.

All the salt that we use is not dug out of salt-

mines, but some is manufactured from sea-wa
from salt-springs. This is done by a very
process. The *brine*, or salt-water, is made t
into large tanks, or shallow pits, where it is al
to stand till the sun and wind have dried up
deal of the water. Then a fresh supply is a
and the water, as it evaporates, keeps leaving
salt behind it, till the brine at last becomes as
as is required. It is then poured off into b
and boiled until almost the whole of the w
boiled away, and the salt crystallises in the p

In France and other countries, where tl
has more power than in England, the whole p
of evaporation is performed by exposing the
to the heat of the sun; and the salt thus ob
is called *bay-salt*, because some of the larges
works of this kind are those on the shores
Bay of Biscay.

Salt is not used merely to *mix* with our
immense quantities are consumed in pres
meat, fish, &c. It also serves as an excelle
nure for some kinds of soil; and is employe
great variety of manufactures, particularly t
earthenware, in which it is used in order t
duce the glazing. So great is the demand f
valuable material, that more than 600,000 t
it are produced every year in this country alo

46.

BOOKS AND PAPER.

in-scrip-tion, *something written up in a place.*
cha-rac-ters, *marks, letters.*
ex-am-ined, *looked at carefully.*
ex-pen-sive, *costing a great deal of money.*

WHEN we look at a heap of old rags, it is di

o believe that we are looking at the materials out of which books are made. If there were any thing of which it might seem safe to say that it was of no use, it would be worn-out rags like these; yet out of this seeming rubbish, the skill of man has found means to produce one of the most useful things we have, and that is *paper*.

People knew how to read and write long before they found out how to make paper. Their books were, of course, very different from those we now use; and they had various contrivances for preserving what they had written. Perhaps the most ancient kind of books ever used by any nation were the sides of hard rocks, or the walls of their houses. On these they would cut or paint the history of their kings, or any great event which they wished to be known by those who came after them. Or they made tiles and bricks, on which they scratched their writing; and these tiles served them instead of books. Only within the last few years the ruins of the great city of Ninive have been dug out and examined; and a great many of these wall-paintings have been discovered, as well as a quantity of bricks, covered with ancient writing. And some of these inscriptions, as they are called, are supposed to be nearly 4000 years old.

Writing on rocks or walls, however, was rather a clumsy contrivance; for if a man wanted to read what was written on them, he was obliged to go to them; they could not be brought to him, nor could he sit by his fireside and read them. Tiles and bricks were more easily carried about, it is true; but they were also very easily broken. Only think how awkward it would be to have to make one's reading off nothing but a cup or a saucer! So, as time went on, people tried some improvements. They had very thin slips of soft wood, on

which the characters of writing were easily cut; and these slips were made to fold and tie together, something like a Venetian blind. Writing on wood continued to be in use for a long time after other and better materials had been discovered. The inscription which Pontius Pilate wrote and fastened over the cross of our Divine Lord was written on wood. It is still preserved in the great church dedicated to the Holy Cross,* at Rome, where it may be seen, together with other precious relics.

In some places, the smooth inner side of the bark of trees was used, and the skins of animals, which were afterwards rolled up, and kept in boxes. These skin-books were very expensive, however; and a box of them probably cost as much as a great house would do in our day. Skins are still used for some kinds of writing. What we call *parchment* is made from the skins of calves. It does not tear or fall to pieces with age, as paper does; and it is, therefore, always used for law-deeds, and other valuable writings which we wish to preserve for a great length of time. The Egyptians had a very singular plan. On the banks of their great river, the Nile, there grew a tall reed with large broad leaves, which was called the *papyrus*. They wrote upon the leaves of this plant; and hence it is that we get the word *paper*, and that we still talk of the *leaves* of a book.

Lastly, the Romans made little thin sheets of wax, which they spread on a wooden board, and on which they wrote with a sharp-pointed instrument, called a *style*. They wrote also upon skins; and every roll of skins they called a *volumen*, which means a *roll*. We keep the word almost unchanged, and still call each single book a *volume*. Our Saxon ancestors used the bark of trees to write on, and

* Called Santa Croce.

chiefly that of the beech-tree. This bark they called *boc*, and hence we have the old English word *book*. All these contrivances may seem to us awkward enough; but at least they show how necessary men feel it is to have something to write on.

47.

BOOKS AND PAPER—(*continued*).

man-u-fac-to-ry, *a place where any thing is made by the labour of men.*
man-u-script, *something written by the hand.*
lit-er-a-ture, *books and learned writings.*

THE Chinese were the first people who found out how to make a kind of paper. At first they used the fibres of vegetables, which they beat into a pulp, and then spread out into thin sheets; and a little later they used rags made of hemp, flax, silk, and cotton, in the same way. The new art soon found its way into Europe; and the Moors, an African nation, who had conquered and settled in Spain, set up manufactories in that country of paper made out of cotton-rags. After this discovery, books became more common, and learning more general. Pens had already begun to be made from quills since the year 630, so that men were now well off for pens, ink, and paper. But with all these improvements, it still took a great deal of time to make a book. Every letter had to be written by the hand, and thus it was impossible to make many copies. It took almost a man's whole life to write out one Bible, for instance; and the labour of copying was so great, that the value of a book became enormous. Had it not been for the monks, few persons would have been found to undertake such

an employment; but by them it was looked on as a *religious work*, to which they devoted themselves for the love of God, because they knew how great a benefit to mankind would result from the preservation of good books. In every large abbey, therefore, there was a room set apart for writing, and a certain number of monks made it the business of their lives to *copy books*. The books which they used for their churches were always written on vellum, or parchment, and the pages were very beautifully painted and gilded. They had such a reverence for all that belonged to the service of God, that they spared neither skill nor labour in adorning and beautifying these books. The book of the Gospels was, however, more richly ornamented than any other. There is still preserved in England one of these books, which formerly belonged to the great St. Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester, which is written in letters of gold upon purple vellum pages. Jewels were set in the very covers of these books, which were often clasped and bound with gold.

The monks, however, did not confine themselves to copying books of devotion. They took great pains in searching for and copying any manuscripts of the Greek and Latin authors which had escaped destruction; and it is to their care that we owe the preservation of all the ancient literature which is so greatly valued. Some of the abbots took long journeys, and went to great expense, to collect books and form libraries, and nowhere were there larger or better libraries than in the abbeys of England.

In spite, however, of the labours of the monks, books were still both scarce and valuable. A library with six hundred volumes in it was considered one *worthy of* a king; and if a man borrowed a book in

those days, he had to leave something behind him as a pledge to make sure that he would return it.

Early in the fifteenth century, some German artists at last discovered the art of printing. They cut their first letters in wood; and, having inked them, they stamped the words on paper. These wooden letters were thick and heavy; and the letters which were thus printed looked clumsy and very black, which is the reason why we call the old-fashioned printed character *black-letter*. A few years before the discovery of printing, it had also been found out that much better paper could be made from *linen* than from *cotton* rags. Then people went on making fresh improvements. They soon left off forming their letters, or types, of wood, and used metal types instead, which had a much better effect; and in a very few years there was no more need for men to spend their lives in copying books with the hand. Ten thousand copies of a book can now be printed in six days, whilst formerly it would have taken six months at the very least to have written out a single copy of the same book; and for the money which would once have been given for a single volume, we may now purchase a tolerable library.

We shall have more to say on the subject of printing in another lesson; but among many much more important results of this great discovery was the increased demand for *good paper*. Linen-rags very soon became a valuable article of commerce; *how* valuable you may guess from the fact, that all the linen-rags in England are not now enough to supply our paper-manufacturers with material for their paper. The sale of these rags forms an extensive trade, and thousands of persons are every day employed in collecting them. Yet still enough rags are not found to produce all the paper that is

wanted; we have, therefore, to send to other countries to buy rags, which are imported in great shiploads. In some states there are laws forbidding these rags to be sold out of the country, lest the materials for paper-making should fail. Those which are brought to England come chiefly from Italy and Germany; and in addition to the quantity obtained in our own country, ten thousand tons weight of these rags are every year imported into England from foreign lands. When the rags are thus obtained, the first thing to be done is to sort them. Some of these rags are of pure white linen, others are coloured, or mixed with cotton; and according to the quality of the rags will be the quality of the paper made from them. You have seen fine white writing-paper, and whity-brown paper, and blotting-paper, and many other kinds; these are made from different sorts of rags. When once they are sorted, the next thing is to wash them; after which, they are torn to pieces by a machine which is furnished with a great number of sharp knives. A stream of water mixes with the shreds of linen, which are thus reduced to a perfectly soft pulp. Square frames covered with wire-cloth are then dipped into this pulp, which is made to spread evenly over their surface. The water drains away between the holes of the wire, and the solid part of the pulp is pressed and dried, and becomes a sheet of paper.

A few years ago the only paper that was used was made of these linen-rags; but means have now been found of making very good writing-paper out of pounded straw; and lately, a plan has been proposed for manufacturing it out of deal-shavings and the fibres of different plants.

48.

CARE OF CLOTHES.

ac-ci-dent-al-ly, *by chance.*
con-se-quent-ly, *therefore.*

THE master of a school was accidentally looking out of the window one day, when he saw one of the boys throwing stones at a hat, which was put upon the fence for that purpose.

When the boys had come into the schoolroom and all was still, he said, "I saw one of the boys throwing stones at a hat to-day; did he do right or wrong?"

There were one or two faint murmurs, which sounded like "wrong;" but the boys generally made no answer.

"Perhaps you think that it depends a little upon the question whose hat it was?"

"Yes, sir," was the reply.

"Well, then, suppose it was not his own hat, and he was throwing stones at it; would he in that case be doing right or wrong?"

"Wrong," was the universal answer.

"Suppose it was his own hat; would he have been right? Has a boy a right to do what he pleases with his own hat?"

"Yes, sir;" "Yes, sir;" "No, sir;" "No, sir," answered the boys, confusedly.

"Well," said the master, "there are two senses in which a hat may be said to belong to any person. It may belong to him because he bought it and paid for it; or it may belong to him because it fits him and he wears it. In other words, a person may have a hat which is his property, or he may have it only as a part of his dress. Now you see that, according to the first of these senses, all the hats in

this school belong to your fathers. There is not, in fact, a single boy in this school who has a hat of his own. Your fathers bought your hats. They worked for them, and paid for them. You are only the wearers; and consequently every generous boy will be careful of the property which is intrusted to him, but which, strictly speaking, is not his own."

49.

DESCRIPTIVE GEOGRAPHY. NO. VI.

HOLLAND.

dair-y, *a place where butter and cheese are made.*
fan-tas-tic, *odd, fanciful.*
sledges, *carriages without wheels.*

THE people who live in Holland are called Dutch: their country is the flattest part of Europe; you might go from one end of it to the other without finding a hill. You see on the map that Holland lies very much along the sea-shore; but in many places the land is much below the sea, and the Dutch are obliged to raise great banks of earth, called *dykes,* to keep the sea from flowing over their fields and houses; and, with all their care, the water will sometimes burst through the dykes and destroy every thing. Yet the people do not lose patience or courage; they set to work to repair their dykes, and to make the best they can of their land. The whole country would be an unwholesome marsh, if they did not make a great many ditches and canals to drain off the water from the land; the water runs into the ditches, and is pumped from them into the canals by means of windmills. You would be surprised, if you were to look around you in Holland, to see so many windmills; sometimes you can count forty or fifty at once, all at work pumping off the water. In such wet land corn does not grow so well

as grass, and most of the country is covered with green fields, in which numbers of cows may be seen feeding. The Dutch are famous for their dairies, and make a great deal of butter and cheese to send to other countries. The fields have ditches between them instead of hedges, and the roads are often bordered by canals which have trees growing on their banks, and there are generally boats and barges moving slowly along, drawn by horses. The Dutch are very fond of flowers, especially tulips and hyacinths; and their gardens are kept in the neatest order. But they are not very pretty; for the Dutch clip their trees into fantastic shapes of beasts and birds, and ornament the garden-walks with figures of animals painted in bright staring colours. It is pleasant to walk into a Dutch house, and see how beautifully clean it is; there is not a dusty corner to be found in it; and every bit of the furniture is rubbed and polished, till it shines like a looking-glass. The Dutchmen even wash the outside of their houses and the pavement of the streets. There is one village, called Broek, where every house always looks as if it had just been fresh painted; they are all white, with green-doors and window-shutters, and stand in gardens filled with the gayest flowers; the tops, too, of the garden-gates are gilded. The people of Broek are so afraid of spoiling the fresh brightness of their doors and gates, that they never go out at the front of their houses, except for a baptism, a marriage, or a funeral. Amsterdam is the chief city of Holland; so many canals run through the streets, that there are two hundred and ninety bridges. Long rows of elms, limes, and walnut-trees stand by the side of the canals; and ships come quite up into the city, so as to stop before the very door of the merchant to whom they belong; and this mixture of green spreading trees and large

ships, with the clean houses and the busy people makes Amsterdam look very cheerful. There are many other large towns in Holland, such as Rotterdam, which has many beautiful buildings, and Utrecht, which stands upon ground that is not quite so flat as the rest of the country. Water is taken from Utrecht to be sold in the streets of Amsterdam; for, with all their canals, the people of Amsterdam have no water that is sweet and fit to drink. In the winter, when the canals are hard frozen, they look more pleasant than at other times; for then people drive upon them in sledges, and the country women skate to market with their large baskets on their heads.

The Dutch are most of them Protestants, but there are many Catholics among them; and the city of Utrecht, of which we have spoken, is now the seat of a Catholic Archbishop.

50.

STORIES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY. NO. IV.

MAGNA CHARTA.

ex-com-mu-ni-cate, *to cut off an offender from the communion of the Church.*
jus-ti-fied, *held to be right.*
vin-di-cate, *to defend.* peers, *equals.*

In the year 1199, King John, the youngest son of Henry II., succeeded to the throne of England. He was worse than any of the kings who had reigned before him. He began by cruelly murdering his nephew Arthur; he starved and tortured many of his subjects, and oppressed them by cruel exactions. Then he quarrelled with the Church; and when the Pope would not consent to the unlawful election of one of his favourite ministers, whom he wished to

make Archbishop of Canterbury, he drove all the monks of Canterbury out of England, and seized their lands, swearing that Stephen Langton, the new Archbishop, who had been consecrated by the Pope, should never set foot in the island so long as he wore his crown. In punishment for his crimes, the Pope excommunicated him, and at last he was forced to submit; and sending for Stephen Langton, the exiled Archbishop, he was absolved by him, and swore to restore to the English people all the rights and liberties of which they had been robbed by the Norman kings, and to give them back the laws of the good St. Edward.

This oath had been drawn up by the Archbishop, who was a brave and holy man, and one whose heart burned within him to see the tyranny and injustice his countrymen were forced to suffer. When he found that John had no thought of keeping his oath, and that things went on as badly as ever, Langton resolved to make a great effort in order to compel the king to keep his word. He knew that Henry I., who was one of the sons of William the Conqueror, had formerly granted the people a charter, by which many rights and liberties were given up to them which they had enjoyed under their Saxon kings. This charter, however, had never been observed, and almost every copy of it had afterwards been destroyed by order of the king. But Stephen Langton found one copy remaining, and he carefully preserved it. At a great meeting of the English barons and nobles, that was held in the abbey-church of St. Edmundsbury, the Archbishop appeared, and producing the charter, he read it aloud. The barons listened to him with breathless interest. All had some grievance to complain of against the king. They now joined with Langton in resolving to demand from him a redress

of past injustice, and a confirmation of King Henry's charter. One by one they came and laid their hands on the high-altar, swearing as they did so to support these just claims sword in hand. The king had equally attacked the liberties of the Church and of the nation; and the barons doubted not that under these circumstances they were justified in opposing his tyranny by force. When Easter came, the barons appeared at the royal court, and boldly presented their demands. John desired to see the charter they talked of; and when he had read it, he swore that he would never grant them liberties which would make him a slave. So the barons left his presence; and calling their followers about them, they soon gathered a great army together, to which they gave the name of the "Army of God and the Holy Church." The command was given to a nobleman called Robert Fitzwalter, whose daughter King John is said to have poisoned, and who was thought the bravest and strongest knight in Christendom.

There was now no one in all England who stood by King John; all men joined with the barons, and declared that they did well in thus vindicating the just liberties of their country. The king saw that he should be forced to yield; so he sent to London where the nobles had assembled, and desired they would fix the time and place for an interview. The king at that time kept his court at Windsor Castle and the place agreed on for the meeting between him and his barons was a green meadow that lay on the south bank of the Thames, and bore the name of Runnymede, or the Council-Meadow.

Here the barons came on the 18th of June 1215. Tents were pitched for them and the king and headed by Langton, they produced a charter which had been drawn up from that of Henry I but containing several important additions. The

first clause of this Great Charter, which has ever been looked on as the groundwork of our English liberties, secured to the Church those rights and privileges of which the Norman kings had sought to deprive her. They had claimed to interfere in the election of her Bishops, and had forbidden the commands of the Holy See to be obeyed when these commands put a restraint on their own lawless wills. But Magna Charta opened with the memorable words by which the great nation of England declared, that the first thing required in order to secure the freedom of the people was to protect that of the Church: "The English Church shall be free, and shall have all her rights and liberties untouched."

Here, then, was to be an end of royal interference in things spiritual. And then it went on to forbid the selling of justice, and to declare that henceforth no freeman of England should be arrested or punished in any way save by the judgment of his peers. Unjust and excessive fines were also abolished, as well as those cruel forest-laws by which a man was punished for slaying a stag or a wild boar by the loss of his eyes, and sometimes by death itself.

After some days spent in discussing the various clauses of the Great Charter, King John consented to sign it; and his pavilion was accordingly pitched in a little island in the river Thames, not far from the meadow of Runnymede, which still bears the name of Magna Charta Island. Knights and barons and Bishops, and the brave Archbishop Langton among the rest, crowded to that little island to witness the solemn act by which they trusted that they had won for England the liberty they loved so much. The king, though he had already secretly resolved never to keep the Charter, was forced to conceal his vexa-

tion, and to set his name to the parchment. And though many a fierce struggle had to be fought before the rights thus granted were really secured to the English nation, yet her liberties may be said to have dated from that hour; and Englishmen justly reckon the signing of Magna Charta among the greatest events in their national history.

51.

DESCRIPTIVE GEOGRAPHY. NO. VII.

GREECE AND TURKEY.

Arch-i-pe-la-go, *a sea full of islands.*
phi-lo-so-pher, *a wise man.*
arch-i-tec-ture, *the art of building.*
schis-ma-tic, *one who is guilty of separating from the Church.*

THE country which lies to the south of Hungary is now called Turkey, from the Turks, an Asiatic people, who conquered it about four hundred years ago, and have remained masters of it ever since. Before that time it formed part of the Greek or Eastern empire, and its inhabitants were called Greeks. Though the Greeks were forced to submit to the Turkish yoke, they often tried to recover their independence; and at last, in 1829, a certain portion of the Turkish dominions was erected into a separate kingdom, which is now called the kingdom of Greece. It consists of the southern peninsula, sometimes called the Morea, together with a small province to the north of the Isthmus of Corinth, and some of the neighbouring islands. The rest of the country, with the other numerous islands in the Grecian Archipelago, still belongs to the Turks.

The chief city of Turkey is Constantinople, which, as we have seen in a former lesson, was built by Con-

stantine, the first Christian emperor. It stands on the beautiful straits called the Bosphorus, which unite the Sea of Marmora to the Black Sea. The harbour is one of the finest in the world; it is called the Golden Horn, and a thousand ships can lie at anchor within it. From the water, you would think Constantinople to be a city of enchanting beauty. The houses are so white, the air so clear, and the tall minarets or spires stand so gracefully against the deep blue sky overhead; then there are dark cypress-groves here and there, and beautiful hills rising in the distance. But when you land, all the beauty disappears. You find yourself in narrow streets, which are both dirty and gloomy, and full of disagreeable odours. The Turks are a proud indolent people, who do nothing to improve the country, which is accordingly badly governed and badly cultivated. They like to spend their days lounging about, smoking long pipes, and drinking coffee. Their dress is not like that of Europeans; they wear very full trousers, and on their heads they have scarlet caps with long silk tassels. The women never appear out of doors without long thick veils of white linen, which quite conceal their faces, holes being just left for the eyes and mouth.

The Turks are Mahometans, and their places of worship are called *mosques*. The great cathedral of Santa Sophia in Constantinople, formerly one of the noblest Christian churches in the world, is now turned into a mosque, and no Christian is allowed to enter it. There are no bells attached to these mosques; but a man stands on the flat roof of the building, and calls the people to prayer at certain hours. The sovereign of Turkey is called the Sultan, and he rules with despotic power.

Greece was in ancient times one of the most celebrated countries in the world. It produced the

greatest philosophers, the most famous poets, and the finest sculptors that ever lived. Every art was cultivated in the highest perfection; and small as were the Grecian states, their people were so brave and resolute, that they defeated armies ten times more numerous than themselves. But as their luxury increased, their power and strength diminished; and in course of time they lost all those great qualities which had once made them so famous.

The country itself is very beautiful and mountainous, but it is very little cultivated. Nevertheless the soil is so good and the climate so delicious, that the groves of olive and myrtle and rich fruit-trees grow almost without cultivation. Athens is the capital of the kingdom, and was once the most beautiful city in the world. It is full of the ruins of its old heathen temples and other public buildings, and these ruins are still looked on as the most perfect models of architecture that are any where to be met with. They are built of pure white marble, which abounds in the mountains of Greece, and to which the air gives a peculiar golden hue.

The islands in the Grecian seas are very numerous, some are rocky and barren, but others abound in figs, olives, grapes, and currants, and their dried fruits furnish an extensive trade.

The Greeks are not Catholics, but belong to a schismatic Church, which does not own the authority of the Pope, and rejects several of the Catholic articles of faith. They are a handsome idle race their dress is very gay, and consists of a short frock and jacket of white cloth, with a broad sash round their waist, and full wide trousers. The women also wear a jacket, often richly embroidered in gold or silver, and the men generally carry swords and pistols in their belts.

To the west of Greece lies a group of islands

ed the Ionian Islands, which form a little repub-
under the protection of the British government.
chief of these islands are Corfu, Cephalonia, and
ite; the last of which produces a great quantity
urrants, which are the fruit of a very small kind
black grape carefully dried in the sun.

52.

THE CHAMELEON.*

Two travellers of conceited cast,
As o'er Arabia's wilds they pass'd,
And on their way, in friendly chat,
Now talk'd of this and then of that,—
Discoursed awhile, 'mongst other matter,
Of the chameleon's form and nature.

"A stranger animal," cries one,
"Sure never lived beneath the sun:
A lizard's body, lean and long;
A fish's head; a serpent's tongue;
Its foot with triple claw disjoin'd;
And what a length of tail behind!
How slow its pace! and then its hue—
Who ever saw so fine a blue!"

"Hold there," the other quick replies;
"'Tis green—I saw it with these eyes;
As late with open mouth it lay,
And warm'd it in the sunny ray,
Stretch'd at its ease the beast I view'd,
And saw it eat the air for food."
"I've seen it, sir, as well as you,
And must again affirm it blue;
At leisure I the beast survey'd
Extended in the cooling shade."

* The chameleon is an animal chiefly found in Arabia
l Egypt, whose colour often changes without any apparent
use.

"'Tis green, 'tis green, sir, I assure ye."
"Green!" cries the other in a fury;—
"Why, sir, d'ye think I've lost my eyes?"
"'Twere no great loss," the friend replies;
"For if they always serve you thus,
You'll find them but of little use."
So high at last the contest rose,
From words they almost came to blows;
When luckily came by a third,—
To him the question they referr'd;
And begg'd he'd tell them, if he knew,
Whether the thing was green or blue.

"Sirs," cries the umpire, "cease your pother—
The creature 's neither one nor t'other:
I caught the animal last night,
And view'd it o'er by candlelight;
I mark'd it well—'twas black as jet;—
You stare! but, sirs, I've got it yet,
And can produce it." "Pray, sir, do;
I'll lay my life the thing is blue."
"And I'll engage that, when you've seen
The reptile, you'll pronounce him green."
"Well, then, at once to ease the doubt,"
Replies the man, "I'll turn him out;
And when before your eyes I've set him,
If you don't find him black, I'll eat him."
He said; then full before their sight
Produced the beast, and lo—'twas white!
Both stared; the man look'd wondrous wise:—
"My children," the chameleon cries
(Then first the creature found a tongue),
"You all are right, and all are wrong:
When next you talk of what you view,
Think others see as well as you;
Nor wonder if you find that none
Prefers your eyesight to his own."

53.

THE HAPPY FAMILY.

·di-ni-a, *an island in the Mediterranean.*
is-pose of, *to sell.*
ra-tive, *a story, something that is related.*

ting through the streets of London, we may
nes see a crowd collected round a large cage
ing a variety of animals usually considered
nemies by nature, such as cats, pigeons, mice,
, canary-birds, and other small creatures.
collections are known by the name of *happy*
, from the good terms which appear to exist
n their members.
mutual affection displayed by these crea-
the result of kindness. They have all been
treated by their owners, and trained by little
s to behave kindly towards one another.
in particular, may by such treatment be
to perform some very remarkable feats, as
seen from the following narrative.
ne years ago, there lived in the island of Sar-
poor carpenter, who had the misfortune to
. he had in the world by a fire which burnt
ise to the ground. He himself was so much
by the flames, that he died soon afterwards,
his widow with three young children to sup-
rancesco, the eldest of the three, being only
ars old. For a time they managed to live
charity of strangers; but this could not last
nd every day Francesco longed more and
o do something to help his mother in her dis-

o young to gain any thing by his work, he at
solved to try what he could earn by selling
-birds. He contrived to make a large cage out
e wooden laths, and then set off for the woods

to secure as many young birds as he could find. H was tolerably successful, and his cage was soon store with finches, linnets, blackbirds, wrens, and pigeons these he carried every week to the nearest market and he generally managed to dispose of some o them. But it may readily be supposed that the sums thus earned were too small to support a family; and Francesco next thought of taming his birds, and training a young cat to live harmlessly in the midst of them. Such is the power of education, even over dumb animals, that, by dint of patience and perseverance, puss was taught at last to live, eat, drink, and sleep in the midst of the birds, without ever attempting to injure them. Bianca—for that was the name of the cat—suffered her little companions to play all sort of tricks with her; and never was she seen to put out her claws, or offer to devour one of them.

Francesco was so much encouraged by his success, that he now set to work to teach his cat to play a sort of game with the little birds, in which each animal had its own part to learn. Puss was to cur herself up in a ball, with her head between her paws as though fast asleep; the cage was to be thei opened, and the birds were trained to rush out upoı her, and try to wake her, some pulling her whiskers some perching on her back, whilst she was never t notice their gambols, or to move so much as a paw At other times, the cat was instructed to seat hersel in the midst of the cage, and there to smooth he fur, and purr aloud, while the birds perched on he head and sang their songs, as though in the greei shades of their native woods. On the next fair-day Francesco appeared with his cage as usual, but no now to sell, but to exhibit his pets. The sight o their performances was so new and so much admired that he went home at night with a well-filled purse

and had the joy of hearing his mother say that his earnings would support them all for several months.

He next trained some partridges, one of which became very fond of its young master, and made an excellent pupil. He called her Rosoletta, and taught her as many tricks as he knew himself. It happened one day that he had lost out of his cage a valuable goldfinch, and the loss was the more serious because he had promised the bird to a lady from whom he had received much kindness. Six days after the goldfinch had departed, Rosoletta likewise took flight, and poor Francesco was almost in despair. But in a few hours, Rosoletta was seen chasing the goldfinch before her along the tops of the lime-trees, in the direction of Francesco's cottage. When at last they reached home, she drove the goldfinch back into his cage; and having seated him in one corner as if in disgrace, she flew from side to side as though in triumph at her success.

Poor Francesco did not live very long to reap the fruit of his exertions. He was seized with a sudden illness, of which he died in a few days, whilst still a mere boy. During his sickness, his birds flew about the bed, as though conscious they were about to lose their friend; some perched on his pillow, and would not leave it; and as to Rosoletta, her signs of grief were really touching. When at last Francesco died, Rosoletta placed herself on the lid of his coffin. She was taken away again and again, but each time she returned to her post; and when the body was carried to the grave, she followed it, and, perched on a neighbouring cypress, she watched the spot where her master was laid. When the crowd had departed, Rosoletta established herself on the grave, which she left only to return to the cottage for her accustomed food. In this way she spent a few weeks; but one morning, the body of the faithful

partridge was found lying dead upon Francesco's grave: the poor bird had literally pined itself to death.

54.

WILLIAM OF WYKEHAM.

ex-clu-sive-ly, *shutting out every thing else.*
ac-quired, *gained.*
pre-scribed, *ordered.*
ef-fi-gy, *the portrait or figure of a person.*

A GREAT deal is being done in this country at the present day to encourage education. Schools and colleges are being built, and large sums of money expended in training persons how to teach; and when we hear of these things, the idea may occur to some of us, that in former times people did not care so much about education as we do now. It is right, however, that we should know how much in all times the Catholic Church has done for the education of her people, and how many of her greatest men have spent their lives and their fortunes in advancing this work. We are going to say a few words about one of these great men; and though the schools which he founded were chiefly for the education of the higher classes, they were not exclusively so, and among those brought up within them, were many sons of the peasantry and the working classes.

It would have been strange if it had not been so, for William of Wykeham was himself a peasant's son. His father lived on the borders of the New Forest of Hampshire, at the little village of Wykeham; and the boy having attracted the notice of a brave knight who was then governor of Winchester Castle, he offered to send him to school. William, therefore, went to school at Winchester; he had no money, and no friends, and no high con-

nections to help him on in life; but he was fond of learning, and he had some habits which helped him quite as much as his diligence and quickness at his lessons.

We are speaking of a time when England was a Catholic land; for William lived during the reign of the good Edward III. Then the great cathedrals and churches were Catholic churches: Mass was said in them every morning, and in Winchester Cathedral there were a great many Masses; for there was a monastery attached to the church, so that there were a great number of priests who said Mass every day. One of the Masses was said at four o'clock in the morning, at a little altar which stood beneath an image of our Lady, against one of the pillars of the aisle. William had a great devotion to our Blessed Lady, and this image was his favourite place of prayer; and every morning, during the time that he remained at school, he rose from bed, even in the depth of winter, and went to the cathedral to hear this early Mass. Afterwards, when he grew up, he used to say, that he owed every thing good that had happened to him through life to the intercession of our Blessed Lady; and this habit of early rising and prayer is the habit of which we just said, that it helped him quite as much as his diligence and cleverness.

One of the talents which William showed, when still quite young, was for architecture and mathematics. When he left school, the governor made him his secretary, and employed him in repairing the castle; and it happened that soon afterwards King Edward III. came to Winchester, and there he met the young architect. The king was then building Windsor Castle, and was much in want of a skilful man of business to take charge of the works; and he was so much pleased with William that he

gave him this post, and took him into his ser
For many years after this, William led a very l
life. His knowledge of business and his other
lents were found so useful, that he was raise
one office after another, till at last he became o
the king's chief ministers of state. But, all
while, he himself desired to lead a very different
and in the intervals of time he could find in
midst of his work, he was steadily preparing hi
to become a priest.

He was thirty-eight years old before he wa
dained priest; and four years later, the king res
to make him lord high chancellor of the king
About the same time, he was also made Bish
Winchester, and thus became raised to two o
highest dignities in the kingdom. Wykeham
as good a Bishop as he had shown himself a good
nister. He took care of his people, and preache
them every Sunday when he was at Winche
and he spent half his revenues on the poor, g
about through the city in disguise, that he
give alms with his own hands without any one
ing out who he was.

He had acquired great wealth whilst in the K
service, and now all his wealth was at the servi
the Church and the poor. He wished, howeve
do yet more with his money; and after long tho
he resolved to spend it in founding two great
leges, one in his own city of Winchester, an
other for older students at the University o
ford. Both these colleges were dedicated t
Lady, and both of them were finished in Wykeh
lifetime; and their buildings, which still remain
are of great beauty, were all raised from the Bis
own designs.

It would take us too long to describe these
leges, or to explain the whole system of educ

which Wykeham introduced into them. He did not think that education meant only *learning;* he understood it as the training of a man's soul and mind; and he knew that to do this to any good purpose, the first thing must always be to lay a solid foundation of Christian faith and Christian principle. He therefore attached beautiful chapels to both his colleges, in which the scholars assisted at all the offices of the Church, which were celebrated with extraordinary splendour. The rule of life which they followed prescribed a great deal of prayer, and aimed at making them not only learned men, but modest in dress, humble in heart, kind and respectful one to another, devout to God, and loyal to their king.

Many great men were brought up in these colleges, some of whom, when they grew up, founded others like them; and thus Wykeham's favourite work was carried on after his death by others. He lived to be eighty years of age, and his whole life was spent in acts of benevolence and generosity. When he died, he ordered his body to be laid in a chapel which he had built on the very spot where was that altar and image of our Lady which he had so often visited in his boyish days. In this chapel, Mass was every day said for the repose of his soul; and though the altar is now destroyed, and the Masses have no longer been said since the cathedral has fallen into the hands of Protestants, you may still see the tomb of the good Bishop, with his effigy carved in stone on the outside.

55.

WE MUST NOT ALWAYS JUDGE BY APPEARANCES.

A GREENFINCH and a nightingale
  Before a window hung,
And all were pleased to hear the tale
  The latter sweetly sung.
A little boy, who heard the strain,
  Would fain the singer see;
And so his father brought the twain,
  And said, "Now, which is he,—
Which is the pretty bird whose lay
  Such joy and pleasure brings?"
The little boy without delay
  Replied, "That's he who sings,—
The greenfinch,—look how bright and gay
  The colours on his wings!
The other bird, so dull and plain,
Could never sing that pretty strain."

56.

THE WHALE.

gul-let, *throat.*
ex-tract', *to get out.*
ad-ver-sa-ry, *enemy.*
pro-di-gi-ous, *very great.*

WHALES are not fishes, though they are often called so, because they live in the water, and have a body which, in some respects, resembles that of a fish. All true fishes have cold blood, and breathe under water by means of their gills, and their young are produced from eggs. But whales have warm blood; they nourish their young ones with their own milk, and breathe air by means of lungs, like the beasts which live on land. No creature which lives in the sea is more useful to us than the whale. The Greenland whale is usually sixty feet long, and from thirty

to forty feet round the body: the head is enormous, and the mouth as large as a room; it is fifteen feet long, six or eight feet wide, and between ten and twelve feet high at the front. In this huge mouth there are no teeth; but several hundred plates of horn hang down from the roof, each plate being thickly fringed with hair; and the whole together form a sieve, through which the whale strains out its food from the sea-water. For this great animal has a very narrow gullet; it cannot even swallow a large herring, but feeds on the tiny shell-fish and jelly-fish, which abound in the northern seas. When it is hungry, it swims with its mouth wide open; the water, filled with these little creatures, rushes in, and is so perfectly strained between the plates of horn, that every particle of food remains in the whale's mouth, while the water runs out again. This horny substance in the mouth is what we call whale-bone. Besides this, a very large quantity of train-oil is obtained from the Greenland whale. It is extracted from the blubber, or layer of fat, from ten to twenty inches thick, which covers the whole body. The train-oil is used in our machinery and in various manufactures; and one whale yields twenty tons of it. But the sperm-whale produces something more valuable still. It has a square blunt head, which looks like an immense box; and truly it is a box, well filled with treasure, yet very light. Inside the head is a great hollow, filled up with a fine pure oil, which after death cools down into the substance called spermaceti, which is used for making the best kind of candles, and also for healing-ointments. And you may think how large the head is, when I tell you that the hollow in it contains ten large barrels of spermaceti. Another part of the head also produces a good deal. To obtain this, hundreds of ships are employed every year in whale-

fishing, or *whaling*, as it is usually called; yet it is very laborious and even dangerous work.

The whale is by nature a mild harmless animal; but when it is obliged to defend itself, its great size and strength render it a terrific adversary. The first weapon used against it is always the harpoon,—a sharp, barbed iron, shaped something like an anchor, which is fastened to a rope several thousand feet long. Directly the whale feels the harpoon sticking in its body, it plunges downwards into the deep water, dragging the rope after it with prodigious strength. The line runs over a pulley fixed in the boat; for if it were dragged over the boat, it would either cut it in two or set it on fire with the friction: both these accidents have happened when it has chanced to slip off the pulley. But often the whale dives down so deep, and gets so far away, that all the rope, long as it is, is dragged out; then the men are obliged to cut it loose from the boat instantly, or they would all be dragged down together into the deep waters. If the rope is not cut, the poor whale is sure to be caught at last. He has a wonderful contrivance in his body for enabling him to remain an hour, or even two, without breathing fresh air: but he must come to the surface of the water at last; and directly he comes up to breathe, the whalers are ready with fresh harpoons to throw at him, till the poor animal, exhausted with loss of blood, can no longer dive under water, and becomes a prey to his captors. But his dying struggles are fearful. Lashing the waters with his tremendous tail, he often hurls men and boats together into the air, or dashes them to pieces. Whalers sometimes secure the mother by striking the cub. The whale is extremely fond of her cub, and keeps it near her for the first twelve or fourteen months of its life: if it is wounded, she takes it in her fins, and

struggles with all her might to get it freed from the harpoon, quite regardless of those which are thrown at herself; and in this way both mother and cub are secured without much difficulty.

57.

A RESOLUTE WHALE.

leak-y, *full of holes or cracks which let in the water.*
dis-cern-ing, *seeing, discovering.*

THE following account may give some idea of the danger to which whalers are sometimes exposed, as well as the tremendous strength of the whale and its ferocity when attacked.

In the summer of the year 1851, the ship *Ann Alexander* sailed from New Bedford, in the United States, to the South Pacific Ocean, in search of sperm-whales. On the morning of the 20th of August, several large whales were discovered; and about noon the same day they succeeded in striking one of them. Two boats had been sent after the whales; the one commanded by the first mate, the other by the captain. The whale which they had struck was harpooned by the first boat. After running some time, the whale turned upon the boat, and rushing at it with tremendous violence, lifted open its enormous jaws, and taking the boat in, crushed it into fragments as small as a common-sized chair. The captain immediately rowed towards the scene of the disaster, and succeeded in rescuing the whole of the boat's crew, nine in number.

There were now eighteen men in the captain's boat, consisting of the captain, the first mate, and the crews of both boats. The frightful disaster had been witnessed from the ship, and another boat was

at once sent to their relief. As soon as it a
the crews were divided, and it was determin
pursue the same whale and make another
upon him. Accordingly they separated, and
ceeded at some distance from each other, as is
on such occasions, after the whale. In a short
they came up to him, and prepared to give
battle. The boat commanded by the first mat
in advance. As soon as the whale perceived t
monstration being made upon him, he turne
course suddenly, and making a tremendous d
this boat, seized it with his wide-spread jaws
crushed it into atoms, allowing the men barely
to escape his vengeance by throwing themselve
the ocean.

The captain, again seeing the perilous con
of his men, at the risk of meeting the same fa
rected his boat to hasten to their rescue, an
short time succeeded in saving them all from a
little less horrible than that from which the
twice so miraculously escaped. He then order
boat to put for the ship as speedily as pos
and no sooner had the order been given than
discovered the whale making towards them
his jaws widely extended. Escape from deat
seemed totally out of the question. They we
or seven miles from the ship; and the whale,
dened by the wounds of the harpoon and lances
had been thrown into him, and seemingly ani
with the prospect of speedy revenge, was wit
few cables' length. Fortunately the monster
up and passed them at a short distance. The
then made her way to the ship, and they all g
board in safety.

It was now determined to pursue the whale
the ship. In a short time she overtook him,
lance was thrown into his head. The ship passe

and immediately after it was discovered that the whale was in pursuit of them. Hauling to the wind they suffered him to pass, and then kept off to overtake and attack him again. When the ship had reached within about fifty rods of him, they discovered that the whale had settled down deep below the surface of the water, and, as it was near sunset, they concluded to give up the pursuit. Subsequent events proved, however, that the whale had formed a deadly resolution to destroy the ship which had given him so much annoyance.

While the captain was waiting on deck for the reappearance of the whale, he suddenly saw it approaching at the rate of fifteen miles an hour. In an instant the determined monster struck the ship with tremendous force, shaking her from stem to stern. She quivered under the violence of the shock as if she had struck upon a rock. The captain immediately went below, and there, to his horror, discovered that the whale had struck the ship about two feet from the keel, knocking a great hole entirely through her bottom. Springing to the deck, he ordered the mate to cut away the anchors and get the cables overboard, to keep the ship from sinking. He then caused the boats to be cleared away, and water and provisions to be got, as the ship was falling over on her side. All hands were ordered into the boats, the captain himself being the last to leave the vessel. They pushed off some distance from the ship, expecting her to sink in a very short time. Upon an examination of the stores they had been able to save, it was discovered that they had only twelve quarts of water, and not a mouthful of provisions of any kind. The boats were leaky, and contained eleven men each, and they were obliged to bale them all night to keep them from sinking.

Next day, at daylight, they returned to the ship,

no one daring to venture on board but the captain. With a single hatchet he cut away the masts, when the ship at once righted. The boats then came up, and the men, tying ropes round their bodies, got into the sea, and cut holes through the sides to get out provisions. They could procure nothing but about five gallons of vinegar and twenty pounds of wet bread. However, they deemed it imprudent to remain by the vessel longer; so they set sail in their boats, and left her.

With faint hopes of being rescued, they directed their course northerly; and on the 22d of August, they had the indescribable joy of discerning a ship in the distance. Their signals of distress were answered, and in a short time they were most hospitably received on board. They were landed at Paita, the nearest port, and thence made their way back to New Bedford, where they arrived on the 12th of August 1852, nearly a twelvemonth after their strange adventure.

58.

TIME.

twi-light, *the dusky half-light after sunset.*
vis-i-ble, *able to be seen.* di-al, *the face of a clock.*
reck-on-ing, *counting.*
pen-du-lum, *that part of a clock which hangs down at the back, and swings to and fro.*

We measure our time by the course which the sun appears to take through the sky. When first he rises, we call it *morning;* when he reaches the south point of the heavens, and is at his greatest height above our heads, we call it *noon* or midday; the time between noon and sunset we call the *after noon;* and when the sun has set, we call it *evening.* A certain sort of light remains, even after the sun

as disappeared, to which we give the name of twi-
ght; and as soon as the twilight fades away, and it
rows quite dark, and the sky is spangled over by
he bright stars which now become visible, we say
hat *night* has set in.

These are the natural divisions of a single day;
ut besides these, we have other divisions which we
ake for our own convenience. We reckon our
ays from the noon of one day to the noon of the
ext; and the space of time between the two we
ivide into twenty-four equal parts, to which we give
he name of *hours*. The twelfth hour after noon, or
idday, we call midnight; and then we begin to
eckon another twelve hours, till we come to noon
gain. Thus every day is twenty-four hours long;
welve from noon to midnight, and twelve from mid-
ight to the following noon.

Every hour is divided into sixty minutes, and
very minute into sixty seconds. But if we had not
omething by which we could *measure* these hours
nd minutes, we should soon lose our reckoning.
Many ways have been invented of measuring time.
You have heard how King Alfred managed to reckon
is hours by means of a wax-candle; but this was,
fter all, an expensive method, and few persons
ould be found who could afford to burn a wax-
andle every time they wanted to measure an hour.
'hen, again, there are hour-glasses, which, in for-
ier times, were very commonly used. An hour-
lass is divided into two hollow parts, which are
oined together by a narrow neck. The upper part
filled with just so much sand as will trickle down
ito the lower part, through a narrow hole in the
eck, in the space of one hour. When all the sand
as run through, you know that an hour has gone
y; and if you want to measure another hour, you
ave only to turn the hour-glass, and let the sand

run back again. This is a very simple and useful invention; but yet it has its inconveniences. In the first place, it only shows that an hour has passed; it does not tell us *the time of day*. It does not show us whether it is one hour or two hours before noon or afternoon; and if by chance you forget to turn your hour-glass, you will at once have lost your reckoning. Then this turning of the hour-glass is troublesome, if one happens to be busy; and altogether it is a method not to be compared with that of clocks and watches. A clock not only tells you that an hour has gone by; but it shows you which hour, and what portion of the hour, and even how many minutes and seconds of that hour, are past. And it does this without giving the least trouble; you have only to look at the face of the clock, and read the time.

Every boy and girl should know how to read the clock. Here is the school-clock, and on its large round dial are certain letters. These letters stand for figures, and are called *Roman numerals*, because they were used as figures by the Romans. Thus V stands for 5, X for 10, L for 50, and C for 100. To express the other numbers, these letters are combined in various ways. We add two to X, to make it XII (12); we put one *before* the V to mark IV (4); and one *after*, to make it VI (6); and so on. The different hours are marked on the face of the clock in these numerals. Here, at the top, is XII., because, as I before told you, we reckon our day in two parts, each twelve hours long; and starting from noon, we go on till midnight, which is just twelve hours after noon. The first hour after noon is marked I., and the second II., and so on; and then the next time the clock strikes XII., we know that it is midnight. Then the first hour after midnight is also I. o'clock, and at last we come to another

XII., which is noon of the second day. Now you see that there are *two hands* on the dial-plate, as we call the round face of the clock. One is shorter than the other, and is called the hour-hand. It moves much slower than the long hand, taking a whole hour to move from one figure to the next. In this way it points out the hours that are passing, whilst the minute-hand points out the minutes, which are marked by these little dots, which you see in a circle just outside the figures. The minute-hand moves much more quickly than the hour-hand. In one hour it goes round, quite round, the circle, and shows how many minutes it is *past* one hour or *before* the next. It is very easy to reckon these minutes, because it takes exactly five minutes for the minute-hand to move from one figure to another. If the minute-hand stands at VI., we call it *half-past* the hour, because then exactly one half-hour has passed since the beginning of the last hour.

You see what a useful thing a clock is; and a watch is the same thing as a clock, only made smaller, so as to be worn in the pocket, and carried from place to place. Clocks and watches are not made quite in the same way; for watches are set in motion by a spring, whereas the wheels of clocks are set going by what is called a *pendulum.* The pendulum, as it rocks from side to side, presses against the wheels inside the clock, and keeps them moving; whilst every time it swings backwards and forwards, it gives a little tick, which tells you that a second of time has passed away.

And now, as this lesson has been rather a hard one, our next shall be more amusing; suppose you listen to a *story about a pendulum.*

59.

THE DISCONTENTED PENDULUM.

A FABLE.

dis-as-ter, *accident, misfortune.*
mo-tion-less, *without moving.*
fat-igue, *to tire, to weary.*
ex-er-tion, *an effort.*

An old clock, that had stood for fifty years in a farmer's kitchen without giving its owner any cause of complaint, early one summer's morning, before the family was stirring, suddenly stopped. Upon this the dial-plate (if we may believe the fable) changed countenance with alarm; the hands made a vain effort to get on; the wheels remained motionless; and each member felt disposed to lay the blame on the others. At length the dial declared his intention of finding out the cause of the stoppage, when hands, wheels, and weights, with one voice, protested that they were innocent.

A faint tick was now heard below from the pendulum, who thus addressed them: "I confess that I am the sole cause of the present disaster, and to satisfy you all, I will honestly state my reasons. The fact is, I am *tired of ticking.*" On hearing this, the old clock became so angry, that he was on the very point of *striking.*

"You lazy thing!" said the dial-plate, holding up its hands.

"Very good," replied the pendulum. "It's all very easy for you, Mrs. Dial, to accuse other people of laziness; you, who have had nothing to do all your life but to stare people in the face, and to amuse yourself by watching all that goes on in the kitchen. Think how you would like to be shut up for life in this dark closet, and to wag backward and forwards year after year as I do."

"As to that," said the dial, "is there not a window in your house for you to look through?"

"For all that," resumed the pendulum, "it is very dark here; and although there is a window, I dare not stop, even for an instant, to look out of it. Besides, I am really tired of my way of life; and if you wish, I'll tell you how I came to take this disgust at my employment. I happened this morning to reckon up how many times I should have to tick in the course of only the next twenty-four hours; perhaps some of you above there can give me the exact sum."

The minute-hand, who was the *quickest* at figures, replied, "Eighty-six thousand four hundred times."

"Exactly so," said the pendulum. "Well, I appeal to you all, if the very thought of this be not enough to fatigue one. And when I began to think what it would come to in a year, or even a month, I quite lost courage; so, after a good deal of thought about the matter, said I to myself, I'll stop."

The dial could scarcely keep its countenance while the pendulum was speaking, but at last replied, "Dear Mr. Pendulum, I really wonder that so useful and clever a person as you are should have fallen into such an error. It is true you have done a great deal of work in your time; so have we all, and so we are likely to do. But though this work may tire us to *think* of, the question is, will it be equally tiring to *do?* Oblige me now by giving just half a dozen strokes as usual."

The pendulum at once gave six ticks, at its usual rate of going. "Thank you," said the dial. "May I ask if the exertion was at all fatiguing or disagreeable to you?"

"Not in the least," replied the pendulum; "i is not of *six* strokes I complain, nor of sixty, but *millions.*"

"Very good," said the dial. "But remember, that though you can *think* of a million strokes in a minute, you are asked to give no more than *one;* and that, however often you may have to swing, you will always have a minute given you to swing in. And now let us all return to our duty; for the maids will certainly lie in bed if we stand idling."

The pendulum saw his folly, and at once began to swing: and then, with one consent, the wheels began to turn, and the hands to move; while the rising sun, shining full upon the face of the dial, brightened it up, as if nothing had been the matter. When the farmer came down to breakfast that morning, and looked at the clock, he declared that his watch must have gained half an hour in the night; but you, dear reader, know how it was. The clock had *lost* half an hour whilst its members had stood still to hold the above consultation.

60.

SPIDERS.

a-part-ment, *room.* cap-tured, *caught.*
pre-cau-tion, *care taken beforehand.*
com-pel-ling, *forcing, obliging.*
per-se-ver-ance, *constancy.*
raf-ters, *the beams in a roof.*

THERE are a great many different kinds of spiders but for the present we shall speak only of those kind which are best known among us, the webs of whic we constantly see in our houses and gardens. Man must often have admired the skill with which the webs are made as well as mended by the spider, by any chance they are torn or damaged.

A spider's web is, in fact, a very clever piece weaving; and it is quite possible that men may ha

taken their first idea of the art of weaving from the works of these little creatures. But weavers have the use of machines, which help them to throw their threads, and to twist them across one another. The spider has none of these, yet her thread is finer and more delicate than any which can be spun by man. Fine as it is, however, it is made up of a number of lesser threads, so fine, that it would take many thousands of them to make up the thickness of a single hair. The body of the spider is provided with bags of a kind of gummy matter; and these bags are full of a vast number of tiny holes, through which the threads are sent out, all of them afterwards uniting into one thread, which is firm and strong enough to bear the weight of the spider hanging to it.

A rope which is made up of a great many strings is much stronger than one, the same size, spun only out of a single thread. The spider acts as if she was aware of this fact: for when she begins to make her web, she lays the foundation with one or two threads, which she doubles and redoubles so as to make them perfectly firm; after which, she finishes her work by drawing other threads in every direction, like the spokes of a wheel, and crossing these again with others, till her gauze-like trap is completed. Her own den is constructed near the web. It is a little apartment lined with the same silky material as that out of which she spins her threads: and, what is very singular, it contains one or two lines which communicate with the web; so that when some unlucky fly, or other insect, has been captured, the spider is at once informed of the fact by the shaking of these lines, and is thus able to dart out of her den, and seize her prey.

If the fly is not completely secured, the spider proceeds to fasten fresh threads around it, so as to

entangle it more entirely; and when the captive is fairly in chains, it is at once put to death, and carried away to be devoured. It is not always, however, an easy matter to get out the body of the fly without tearing the web. Now the spider is a very saving manager, and takes every pains to avoid pulling her trap to pieces. When she cannot get the fly out without destroying a part of the web, she sets about it in the cleverest way possible, so as to spoil as small a piece of it as she can. So she cuts the web just round the spot where the fly is caught; and this being done, the fly of course falls out. But it does not fall to the ground; for the spider always takes the precaution of fixing a strong line to the wings of the insect before she cuts the web, so that it hangs by this line, and is of course easily drawn up again and carried into the den.

The fine threads which we see covering the grass and bushes on an early summer's morning, and to which we give the name of 'gossamer,' are the production of the gossamer-spider. This insect does not spin any web, but only shoots out long lines of this fine gossamer into the air; and these lines are so light, that they will carry the weight of the spiders, which thus float about in the air almost as easily as though they had wings.

Attempts have been made, at different times, to turn the spider to some useful account by compelling it to spin for the benefit of man. The idea of making silk out of spiders' webs first occurred to a Frenchman, who succeeded in collecting a quantity of the silken bags which contain the eggs of the garden-spider, from, which he spun silk enough to make a pair of stockings. He then caught 5000 spiders, hoping to be able to keep them alive, and to make them provide him with silk. But the large spiders soon devoured the little ones, and it was

found that the only chance of keeping them from killing one another was to shut them up in separate cells. This has been done, and a little machine has been invented for winding off the thread as fast as the spider spins it from her body; but though the silk thus produced is strong and very glossy, the spider yields too small a quantity to make it worth the trouble and expense of collecting it.

If any of our readers are disposed to look on spiders only with disgust, on account of the cruelty and cunning which they display, we must just add, that they have some better qualities, which deserve in justice to be mentioned. They will suffer themselves to be tamed by men; and many pretty stories are told of prisoners who have found amusement and comfort in their solitary homes from the friendship and companionship of spiders. Nor should one story be forgotten, which has for ever established the reputation of the spider, not only for cunning, but for patience and perseverance. About five hundred years ago, Edward I., king of England, had conquered Scotland, and forced the brave Scottish chief Robert Bruce to fly and seek shelter among the mountains. He wandered from place to place, hiding from the English soldiers; and one night he took refuge in an old hut, and lay down to sleep on some straw which he found in a corner. But his thoughts were so full of the dangers to which his country was exposed, that he could not sleep; and as he lay, he watched a poor spider, which was making its web among the rafters just above his head. It was trying to swing from one rafter to another; five times it had made the attempt, and each time in vain. Not disheartened by these failures, however, it tried yet a sixth time, and at last, the rafter was reached in safety. Then Bruce *remembered, that* exactly five times he had tried to

make head against the English, but without success; and jumping to his feet, he cried out, "I accept the lesson; and I too will not despair, but will venture my life for my country yet once again."

He was soon once more at the head of his followers; and the sixth effort of the Scottish chief ended in a great battle, which delivered Scotland from the power of the English king.

61.

ST. FELIX AND THE SPIDER.

ag-gra-vate, *to increase, or make heavier.*
in-di-ca-tive, *showing, pointing out.*
ex-as-per-a-ted, *made more angry.*

St. Felix was ordained priest by Maximus, Bishop of Nola. During the persecution which raged under the Roman emperor Decius, Maximus escaped from the city; not that he feared death, but that he would not tempt God, and wished to preserve himself for the service of his flock. Felix was seized and cruelly scourged; he was then loaded with bolts and chains about his neck, hands, and legs, and thrown into a dungeon, the floor of which was strewn with potsherds and pieces of broken glass. The Bishop had fled into the desert, and was suffering all the pains of famine, aggravated by his advanced age, and all the sorrow and distress of mind which he experienced on account of his flock. But God did not forsake him. In the dead of the night, an angel appeared to Felix in his prison. When first he heard the angel's voice, and beheld the brilliant light with which he was surrounded, Felix thought it had been a dream; but the angel bade him rise: his chains instantly fell off him, the gates opened of their own accord, and Felix passed between the guards as though he were invisible, and arrived by a

way he knew not at the desert where Maximus was perishing of hunger. He found the old man lying prostrate on the ground, stiff and cold, as though he had been dead; he had already lost all consciousness, nor was there the slightest motion indicative of life except the faintest breathing. Unable to render him any assistance, Felix had recourse to prayer; when, looking up, he saw a bunch of grapes hanging from a bramble-bush, which he took and squeezed into the parched mouth of the dying man. Then the aged prelate revived a little; and recognising Felix, he said, "You have been a long while coming, my son; but God promised me that you should bring me succour. Carry me back, I pray, to my flock." Felix lifted the old man upon his shoulders, and bore him to the faithful, who were longing to behold their Bishop again.

Felix kept himself concealed till the tyrant was dead; he then appeared again in public, and was occupied in instructing the people in the streets and in the public squares, as was his wont, when the pagan magistrates, exasperated by his zeal, sent to have him apprehended. The officers of justice met him in their search; but whether God had changed the countenance of Felix, or that their eyes were holden so that they could not see, they failed to recognise him, and inquired whether he had met Felix the priest. Evading their question, he passed on; but being informed that he whom they had accosted was the very man they were seeking, they almost immediately returned. Warned by the shouts of the people, Felix hid himself on the instant in a ruin which stood close by; but as the passage was open, and his enemies close upon his footsteps, he would soon have been taken, had not a spider at that moment woven a thick close web across the entrance. The pursuers, when they came up, perceiving nothing but an old

wall covered with cobwebs, made no attempt to enter, knowing that Felix could not have passed through without breaking the web, and deeming it impossible that so thick a mesh could have been woven in so short a time. They therefore continued their search elsewhere; and Providence by this miracle saved the life of the saint. Felix then hid himself in an old well, where, for six whole months, he was supported by a devout Christian woman, who was inspired by God, without knowing what she did, to place food from day to day on the brink of the well as long as the saint lay concealed in it. His drink was the dew that fell every night into a broken trough which chanced to be near, and which was miraculously supplied with as much water as sufficed to quench his thirst. When peace was restored, Felix returned to the city, where he was welcomed as one risen from the dead. On the death of Maximus, the people would have made him Bishop, but this his humility refused; neither would he sue to have his goods, which had been seized, restored when peace returned, but passed the rest of his days in holy poverty, supporting himself by the labour of his own hands.

62.

SOMETHING ABOUT LEAVES.

re-sem-ble, *to be like.* trip-lets, *three together.*
in-hale, *to breathe in.* ex-hale, *to breathe out.*

In some of our former lessons we have spoken abou the flowers, seeds, and stems of plants, and it onl remains to add a few words about their *leaves.* have often been struck with admiration at the won derful variety of leaves which exists in the plant around us. There is something, it is true, in whic every leaf may be said to resemble another lea

They are all green, and all have something of the same shape and the same construction. But the greens are not the same greens; and if you were to pick twenty leaves and put them side by side, I doubt if any two of them would exactly match in colour. As to their form, the variety is really endless. The edge of one is toothed, and that of another is scalloped; this one is quite smooth, and that has sharp prickles; one grows singly, another in bunches, and a third, like the rose-leaf, in graceful little triplets; one stands upright, another hangs gently downwards; in short, each class of plants and each variety of the class has its own distinct variety of foliage.

Leaves are a very important part of the plant, and are absolutely necessary in order to enable it to live and grow. We have already seen that it is in the leaves that the sap gets changed into nourishment for the plant, by means of the air which is breathed in through the pores of the leaves. In fact, leaves act exactly in the same way in plants as our lungs do in the human body. The lungs breathe in pure air, and this air changes and purifies the blood as it circulates through the body. The sap is the blood of the plant, and the leaves are its lungs. But there is this difference between the lungs of animals and the lungs of plants, which is, that they do not breathe *the same kind of air*. The atmosphere is made up of several parts, and one of its component parts is a gas called *oxygen*, which is necessary to the life of all animals. Whenever any animal takes a breath, the air which he inhales passes into his lungs, and the oxygen in the air mingles with his blood, and consumes those portions of our food which have been carried into the blood in a liquid state. But at the same time, another sort of gas is being formed in the lungs, which would be

poisonous to us if it remained there; it is called *carbonic acid gas*, and is formed by the consumption of the food by the oxygen. It is necessary that the food which is in our blood should be consumed in this way by the oxygen, because by this process is produced that animal warmth which is required for the preservation of our life; but it is also necessary that we should in some way or other get rid of the carbonic acid gas, which is thus, as it were, manufactured in our lungs. We do so by *exhaling* it, that is, by breathing it out. At every breath we take, we breathe in fresh and pure air, and breathe out bad and impure air, charged with the carbonic acid gas which has been produced in our lungs.

Now the wonderful thing which I want you to remark is, that this carbonic acid gas, which is poisonous to animals, and which they are obliged to get rid of, is exactly the kind of air on which plants live; and that the chief way in which they obtain it from the atmosphere is from the exhalation of animals. They do not get it from the soil, but breathe it in from the air, through their leaves, which are their lungs; and the air which they breathe out again is full of oxygen, so that they thus restore to the atmosphere the oxygen which has been lost by the breathing of animals. In other words, we through our lungs breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbonic acid gas, and the plants through their leaves breathe in the carbonic acid gas and breathe out a fresh supply of oxygen. It is actually necessary for us to breathe out this bad air, or we should die, and then the plants breathe it in, and it helps them to grow and live. So the lungs of animals give what the lungs of plants require, and the lungs of plants in their turn breathe out what the lungs of animals require.

Leaves grow from buds just as flowers do. If

you look in spring at a tree, you will see the buds just beginning to swell. They grow larger and larger, and at last the green leaves shape out. Sometimes both leaves and flowers are shut up within the same bud, as in the lilac, or horse-chestnut; and when we see these leaves and blossoms in summer-time, it seems very wonderful to think that a few months before, they were all shut up together in a bud scarcely larger than the head of a pin. The wonder does not strike us, because the growth and the change take place so gradually that we do not notice it. If it were all done in a day or an hour, we should think it wonderful enough. But it is not less to be admired because it is done slowly; the wonder is that it is done at all. No one but God could bring all this beauty out of a single bud; and He could do it as easily in an hour as in a year, if He thought it best.

Leaves are such common things, that we seldom think how beautiful they really are. But take any common leaf into your hand, such as that of the strawberry-plant for instance. See how delicately it is notched. Hold it up to the light and see the lines that run from the middle to the edge, and the fine network that stretches between all these lines. Now turn it over, and look at the ribs at the back: they are the framework of the leaf, just as timbers are the framework of a house. They keep it firm and in shape, and prevent the wind from tearing it like a rag.

Leaves are of great service in many ways, not only to the plants on which they grow, but also to man. The moisture which they breathe out makes the air soft, while the fragrance of the flowers makes it balmy. It is true that the quantity of moisture given out by each leaf is very small; but when we put it all together, the moisture supplied by the thousands of leaves which grow around us has a very

sensible effect on the atmosphere. Then the shade which they afford is another benefit, both to us and to the fruits of the tree, which would often be quite burnt up, if the leaves did not fall over them and shelter them from the sun.

There are some leaves which are very curious in shape, quite unlike any of those which grow on the plants we are familiar with in England. The most curious of all, perhaps, is that of a plant which grows in China and the island of Ceylon, and is called the pitcher-plant. At the end of the leaf the main rib extends out like a tendril, and ends in a formation exactly the shape of a pitcher, being hollow, with a little lid fitting exactly over the mouth. This lid is generally shut down, and so the rain cannot get in, but yet the pitcher is always full of water. It comes from the watery part of the sap, which is poured in from thousands of little mouths on the inside of the pitcher, and so it is kept full of water. In Ceylon this plant is called the *monkey-cup*, because the monkeys sometimes open the lid and drink the water. And instances have occurred in which men have saved their lives by finding these leaves in places where there was no spring of water, and quenching their thirst by the store thus wonderfully furnished them by the little pitcher-plant.

63.

DESCRIPTIVE GEOGRAPHY. NO. VIII.

ITALY.

pen-in-su-la, *a piece of land almost surrounded by water.*

ter-ri-to-ry, *a portion of land belonging to any particular government.*

e-rect-ed, *put up.* sculp-tures, *carvings in stone*

WHEN you look at the map of Europe, you see i

:he south a long narrow peninsula, shaped something like a boot, which stretches forward into the Mediterranean Sea. This is Italy, the most beautiful of all the European countries, possessed of a climate where the finest fruits and flowers grow almost without culture. It is walled in on the north by the great chain of the Alps; but on the west and south, its lovely shores are washed by the Mediterranean; whilst on the east the Adriatic Sea, or the Gulf of Venice, as it is sometimes called, separates it from Austria and Turkey.

When you cross the Alps, and catch the first sight of Italy, lying stretched out at the foot of the mountains, it seems as though you were just going to enter into a new world. The mountain-passes, through which you have been travelling, are rugged and barren, and the road often covered with ice and snow. In the valleys no trees have been visible but those of the dark fir-forests; but once on the southern side of the mountains, and the scene is entirely changed. The hills are clothed with vines and chestnuts. Down on the plains you see clumps of olives, and fig-trees loaded with fruit. The fields are thick with corn, and their hedges are often formed by trellises of the rich purple grape-vine; and the air is so clear, the sky so deeply blue, and the sun so brilliant, that you do not wonder when you recollect that in all ages Italy has been called the Garden of the World.

Italy differs from France, or Spain, or Great Britain, in one respect,—it is not all one kingdom, and it is inhabited by various races, who form several distinct states. At the foot of the Alps stretches the vast plain of Lombardy, which is watered by the river Po, and of which Milan is the capital. Piedmont lies to the west of Lombardy; its capital is Turin; and these two states are now united under

the government of the King of Sardinia. The central provinces of Italy bear the name of the States of the Church, because they belong to the Sovereign Pontiff, whose see is fixed at Rome; and the southern portion of the peninsula, together with the island of Sicily, form the kingdom of Naples. Besides these there are several smaller states in the north, and a territory in the north-east, including the city of Venice, which is subject to the crown of Austria.

Lombardy is not so beautiful as some other parts of Italy, but it is rich and fertile. The Alps shelter it from the cold north winds, and its meadows are so well watered by the numerous streams which fall into the river Po, that they bring forth three or four crops of hay every year. Here you see plenty of mulberry-trees for the silkworms; and a great quantity of rich silk and velvet is manufactured, specially at Genoa. As you travel on through Italy, you see plenty to remind you that you are in a Catholic land. By the side of the road stands the crucifix, or some holy image; the Stations of the Cross are to be seen erected against the side of some steep hill; the Angelus bell sounds from the church turrets, and the peasants, as they hear it, kneel with uncovered heads to repeat their prayers. Then when you enter the Italian cities, there are pictures of our blessed Lady at the corners of the streets, with lamps burning before them; and in the shops, too, you are sure to see her image, with its little lamp, and, perhaps, a bunch of fresh flowers before it.

The cities of Italy are very beautiful. The churches and palaces are often built of pure white marble, which the clear air preserves in all its beauty. The Cathedral of Milan is one of the most beautiful buildings in the world; it is all of polished white marble, most delicately carved, and within it is the shrine of the great St. Charles Borromeo, who

was Archbishop of Milan in the sixteenth century. Another very celebrated city is Venice. It is built on a hundred and fifty low islands, which lie near the shores of the Adriatic, and are so low and flat, that the churches and houses seem to be rising out of the water; and the people go from one part of the city to another in barges, called gondolas. No sound of horses or wheels is heard in Venice; for the streets are really canals, with lofty houses on each side of them, and just a narrow footpath between the houses and the water.

Below the plain of Lombardy, another mountain-chain stretches to the south, dividing Italy into two parts. These mountains are called the Apennines. Florence, Rome, Naples, and many other famous cities, lie to the west of them, between the mountains and the sea.

Rome, the capital of the Christian world, which stands on the river Tiber, is no longer the great and magnificent city which it was in the time of its pagan emperors. It stands on its seven hills, in the midst of a wild uninhabited plain, called the Campagna. It is full of the ruins of palaces and heathen temples, which now stand side by side with Christian churches, and places rendered holy by having been the scene of countless martyrdoms, or containing the shrines and relics of the saints.

There are three hundred and sixty churches in Rome,—a church, as is sometimes said, for nearly every day in the year. The largest of these is the great Church of St. Peter, which joins the palace of the Popes, and contains the tombs of the Apostles SS. Peter and Paul. A hundred lamps burn day and night around their holy sepulchre; and the great dome of St. Peter's, which rises above their tomb, may be seen miles away. The ceremonies of the Church are performed in Rome with extraordinary splendour;

and pilgrims come here from all parts to visit these sacred places, and receive the blessing of the Holy Father. There are also colleges in Rome belonging to all nations, and one large college, where young men of every nation in the world are educated, and where you may see Chinese, Hindoos, and the natives of other heathen countries, who are educated here, that they may return to their own land as missionaries.

Naples is beautifully situated by the sea, on a bay which bears its name. It stands very near the volcano of Vesuvius; but though this mountain so often casts forth flames and burning ashes, the people do not seem to heed it, but go on building their houses and planting their vineyards up its sloping sides.

There is no country where the arts are so much cultivated as in Italy. Most of the Italian cities are full of fine paintings and sculptures; and their churches are decorated with costly marbles. The Italian language is very soft and musical, and is something like Latin, from which it is chiefly derived.

64.

THE APOSTLE OF THE NEGROES.

re-pul-sive, *disgusting, repelling.*
de-grad-a-tion, *the being lowered in condition.*
mos-qui-to, *a poisonous insect.*
di-a-lect, *language.* re-lax-a-tion, *amusement.*

As Lucy Wentworth was one morning sitting alone at the parlour-window learning her lessons, she was startled by hearing a voice close to her asking for charity. Looking up from her book, she saw what frightened her very much. The beggar was a black man, and Lucy had never seen a black man before. She was only ten years old, and a timid child for her age, so throwing down her book she gave a loud

ry, and ran out of the room. Her mother, who heard her cry, came to see what was the matter, and finding the poor man still at the window, she spoke to him kindly, and gave him some halfpence before sending him away.

Meanwhile, Lucy did not dare to come into the room, but stood peeping at the door, wondering how her mother could venture to talk to the strange-looking beggar. When he was gone, her mother called her, and explained to her that black men were not more to be feared than white men, and that our white skins must look as strange to them when first they see us as their black skins do to us. But Lucy protested she should never have courage to look at a black man, and that she hoped the beggar would never come near the house again.

Her mother only answered by asking her what day of the month it was. "Oh, mamma," she said, "surely you have not forgotten? It is the 8th of September, our Blessed Lady's birthday." "And to-morrow will be the 9th; will it not?" said her mother; "and the 9th of September is the feast of a saint, whose story would teach you, Lucy, to feel more kindly towards black men." Lucy was as fond of a story as most children, and she loved nothing better than to hear her mother tell her stories of the saints. But she could not remember what saint's day fell on the 9th of September; and opening her Missal, she said she could find no saint marked in the calendar against that day. "Very likely not," said her mother, "for *every* saint is not marked in the calendar of the Missal; and, besides, this saint was only beatified a few years ago, and perhaps your book was published earlier. The saint I was alluding to is the Blessed Peter Claver." "And was he a black man?" said Lucy. "No," replied her mother, "though there have been black saints as

well as white ones, and some day, perhaps, I will tell you a story of one of them. But Peter Claver had a great deal to do with black men, and lived amongst them for many years; and he did so much for them, and converted so many, that he is called the Apostle of the Negroes. If you like to hear his story, I will tell it you."

Lucy drew her stool to her mother's feet; but before beginning the story, her mother bade her bring her large atlas, and opening it at the map of South America, she desired her to find out the city of Carthagena, on the northern coast of that continent. "In order to make you understand the story of Father Claver's life," she said, "I must first say one or two words about the negroes, and how they came into America. They are not Americans by birth, they belong to the races which inhabit Africa. But when the Spaniards conquered South America three hundred years ago, they were eager to work the rich gold and silver mines of that country; and at first they obliged the native Americans to labour for them in the mines. But the American Indians were a people unused to hard work, and they soon broke down under the unaccustomed fatigues and miseries to which the cruelty of their Spanish masters exposed them. The Spaniards then devised the plan of fetching the African negroes from their own country, and using them instead of the native races of America. The negroes were a much stronger race of men, and able to do much harder work; and, accordingly, shiploads of these poor people were every year brought from their own country and landed on the South-American shores. This was the beginning of the African slave-trade.

"It would be quite impossible to tell you all the horrors and cruelties that were practised in this trade. The negroes were packed close in small and

wretched vessels; and when the cargoes were disembarked at Carthagena, which was then the chief harbour of Spanish America, the greater number were generally found infected with small-pox, fever, and other terrible diseases. They were taken to the market-places, and bought and sold like cattle. No one ever thought of teaching them the Christian religion; the only thing to be considered was, how to get the most profit and the most work out of them; and so these unhappy creatures were left in the lowest state of misery and degradation which it is possible for a human being to fall into.

"At last some Jesuit fathers came to Carthagena, and among them was a young Spanish nobleman named Peter Claver. He was a very learned man, and a very eloquent preacher. People admired his graceful manners and address, and prophesied that he would become an ornament to his order, and that he would do great things in Carthagena among the rich and educated classes. But he had not been many days in the city before he was called to a very different kind of labour; he became aware of the state of the negroes, and instantly he felt a powerful attraction to devote his entire life to their service. The more he heard of them, the more did his burning anxiety increase to commence his work; and at last he obtained the leave of his superiors to take on him the unenvied mission. He began by taking a solemn vow to be for the rest of his life *the slave of the negroes*. As soon as a slave-ship entered the harbour of Carthagena, Father Peter hurried down to the water-side with his countenance beaming with joy. 'It is a ship-load of souls for Jesus,' he would say. Then he would go on board, undismayed by the horrible scenes which he was sure to encounter. If he found any children amongst the negroes, he at once baptised them; and then gave his attention to

the sick. He always came laden with wine, food, preserves, and other delicacies, which he obtained by begging. These were what he called his *baits*. He knew very well that these poor savages would regard any white man at first with rage and hatred, and that the only way of winning them was by acts of kindness. He did not at first understand any of the African dialects, and yet he always contrived to make the negroes understand him. When he had won their confidence, he would take them all to the magazine or prison, where they were all lodged like cattle in a pen, until they were sold off to their new masters. This was the most horrible place in all Carthagena. Heaps of filthy straw formed the only beds on which the sick, the dying, and even the dead, lay side by side with those who were still in health. Here Father Claver may be said to have *lived*, and here, day after day, he might be seen, with his crucifix hanging round his neck, instructing the negroes and preparing them for baptism."

"But, mamma," said Lucy, "how could he talk to them, if he did not understand their language?"

"Partly by interpreters," replied her mother, "partly by such broken phrases as he did understand, and partly by the use of pictures. He had erected an altar in one room of the prison, over which he placed a large picture of our Lord upon the Cross, with the Blood flowing from His Five Sacred Wounds. And he would explain to them that in baptism this Precious Blood was to be poured upon their souls to cleanse them. Hour after hour, and day after day, and year after year, went on, and as fast as one ship-load of negroes was instructed and baptised, another came. There was no change in his life; it was spent between the hold of the slave-ship and the cells of the slave-prison. It was a most wearying and laborious

life too, and the scenes in which he lived were most repulsive to nature. But he worked on without feeling wearied; and when at last he died, four hundred thousand negroes had been taught by his lips, and baptised by his single hand."

"Oh, mamma," said Lucy, "is that possible? How many years, then, was he at Carthagena?"

"More than forty years," replied Mrs. Wentworth; "and during all that time he never laid aside his works of charity for a single day. He was the nurse of the negroes as well as their teacher, and very often his own cloak was the only bed on which he could lay the sufferers. But you shall read to me an account of his labours, which I have here, and which will give you a better idea of this heroic man." Lucy took the book which her mother gave her, and began to read as follows:

"Every morning, as soon as the Jesuits' church was opened, Father Claver took his seat in the confessional. The church was damp and hot; and in the hottest part of it, near the door, on which the rays of a tropical sun beat till mid-day, sat the negro's confessor, and never went away till it was time to say the last Mass. On festival-days, at three o'clock in the morning, he was there ready to confess his beloved slaves; noble ladies attempted to pass through the crowd to get to him, but he gently sent them back, saying that he was there for the service of the negresses. When Lent came round, his labours redoubled. At break of day he began his work, and he never rose till eight hours had passed over his head. The interval of rest was not a long one; at two he was there again, as that was the hour appointed for the negresses. The mosquitoes swarmed around him, so that he was sometimes covered with blood from their stings. Towards six o'clock in the evening he heard the men's confes-

sions, till the hour came for closing the college-gates, and he was compelled to leave off his labours. Then, and not till then, he went away; and often so weary and exhausted was he, that he staggered when lie left his seat, and was borne fainting from the church.

"When Easter came, his only relaxation was to leave the town to seek for the negroes scattered among the mountains which overhang it; this was the only time when he ever set foot beyond its gates. He only exchanged the hot streets of the city for more laborious ground. On foot he climbed mountain-sides, or waded through marshes and ravines. The rain fell in torrents and drenched him to the skin, and the lightning of tropical storms flashed around him; but on he marched, to seek for souls in that wild country. On arriving at a negro settlement, he planted a cross, and assembled the slaves around it, or else in the chapel, after their work was over, and preached to them with a crucifix in his hand. He established himself in the poorest negro-hut that he could find, and never quitted the place as long as there was any one left to be brought to the Sacrament of Penance. At one time he suddenly broke away from the house of a Spaniard where he was staying, and plunged deep into the recesses of the mountains. He marched on through wild and impracticable roads; no one knew how he could find his way, for he took no guide. When he came back, pale and wan from fatigue, he was gently reproached for his imprudence; his only reply was, that there were three souls to be saved. Afterwards it was discovered that he had gone to administer the last Sacraments to three old negroes, who had been abandoned by all the world, and had crawled into a ruined hut to die.

"But it was not in the forest or on the mountain

that God meant Father Claver to be a missionary; his proper home was in the town. And, oh, what a check it was to sin to have such a man within the walls of the city! His very form, when, under the intolerable rays of a burning sun, he begged in the market-place for his negroes, was a protest against sin for the whole population of that crowded town. The white man felt his power fully as much as the black; and Father Claver's voice, preaching in some public square when the flood of sin grew stronger than usual, found a response from one end of the city to the other.

"If you would wish to know the secret and the source of his power, it was that a spark from the Heart of Jesus had set his soul on fire, and burned steady and unconsuming. The only explanation of his unheard-of toils was that he saw in each swarthy negro a child of Jesus and Mary. Long ago there was One who wept over the wicked city of Jerusalem, and then in the garden of Gethsemani shed blood enough under its olive-trees to redeem the world; and this alone will explain to you how it was that Father Claver, imitating the love of his Divine Master, braved all the horrors of the slave-prisons of Carthagena, and earned the glorious title of Apostle of the Negro race."

"Oh, mamma," said Lucy, as she laid down the book, "I shall never run away again when I see a negro; and I shall never see one of them again without thinking of Father Claver, and loving them for his sake."

"Or rather," said her mother, "you will try to imitate this blessed saint by seeing in them souls purchased by the Precious Blood of Jesus; and you will love them because God loves them as He loves all men, and because they, like you, are the children *of Jesus and Mary.*"

65.

THE STEMS OF PLANTS.

sin-gu-lar, *strange, curious.*
pli-a-ble, *easily bent.*
ex-o-ge-nous, *growing outside.*
en-do-ge-nous, *growing inside.*

We speak of a lily as having a stalk, and of an oak-tree as having a trunk, but in reality trunks and stalks are nearly the same things; they are both the stems of the plants to which they belong. The stem is like the body of a plant, which supports its leaves and branches, and through which the sap rises from the root. All stems, however, are not alike: large trees have strong woody trunks, whilst smaller plants have no wood in their stems, because they do not need it. They have not heavy tops and branches as trees have, and so their stems are strong enough to support them, without having any wood in them. Some plants, however, require to have stronger stems than others; not because they have heavy tops, but because they are so tall and slender, that the wind blows them about very much as it passes over them. Wheat, rye, and most kinds of grass are of this kind, and the way in which their stalks are made is very singular. There is a flinty earth in them. It is sucked up from the ground by the little mouths in the roots, and mixing with the sap, goes to that part of the plant where it is wanted. It is not wanted in the grains of corn, so it does not go there. But it goes into the stalk; and it is this which makes the straw, which is made from the dried stalks of these plants, so strong and pliable.

There are two kinds of stems: first, there are those which grow by adding fresh layers of fibre on the outside of the stem, as is the case with all the large trees of temperate climates. If you were to

look at the trunk of a tree which had been sawn in two, you would see a number of rings running round the centre of the trunk. These rings are in reality the different layers of woody fibre, one of which has grown on the outside of the tree every year. Plants of this kind are called *exogenous.*

Then there are stems of another kind, of which the growth is from *within,* and which enlarge from their centres, whilst the outside remains soft and yielding. Sugar-canes, bamboos, and all kinds of grass have this sort of stem, as well as most of the trees which grow in hot climates, such as dates and cocoa-nuts. These plants are called *endogenous.*

Plants which have strong trunks, and stiff upright stalks, can stand up by themselves. But there are some stems which are too weak to do this, and which must be held up by winding round something firmer than themselves. It is thus that the stems of the hop and the bean-plant wind round the sticks which we set to support them. Peas and vines are held up in a different way. They send out little tendrils, like cork-screws, which twist round the sticks or poles against which they lean; and other plants, like the Virginian creeper, send out little stalks with feet at the end of them, which, as it were, lay hold of the wall or fence over which the creeper is growing, and thus support the stem.

66.

ON STEMS—(*continued*).

in-ci-sion, *a cut made in any thing.*
cir-cu-late, *to move or flow round, as in veins or channels.*

We said in the last lesson, that all our large trees grow by adding every year a layer of new wood on

to the outside of their stems. Some of you may have read this, and thought no more about it; and others when they read it, may have thought it very hard to believe. All their lives they have seen great trees growing around them, and yet they never saw this new layer of wood growing on the outside of their trunks. Nay, what is more, they may have cut their names on the bark of these trees, when they were little boys, and there the letters are as plain as if they had been cut only yesterday. It is clear, therefore, they think, that no new layer of wood can have grown outside these trees.

But we did not say the new wood was formed *outside the bark.* It is not: it is formed of a bark which grows inside the outer one. In every tree there are two kinds of bark: the *outside* bark, which is that rough coating to which we generally give the name; and the *inside* bark, which is green and juicy, and which you can see if you strip off a piece of the outer bark. There it lies, covered up by its rough coat; and during the warm weather this juicy inner bark is formed into a fresh layer of wood; whilst, meanwhile, the outer bark swells and grows larger, so as always to fit the size of the trunk which it protects and clothes. The wood which is formed in this way is full of little pipes, through which the sap rises to the very top of the tree, and to the ends of its most distant branches. How wonderful this is when we think of it! Sap is a liquid like water, and you know that water will not run up-hill. It will not rise unless it is pumped, or forced up in some way, for naturally it flows *downward* into the lowest place. There are no pumps in the trunks of trees, and yet the sap rises through them, and men with all their learning cannot find out how it does this. They can only say that God has so ordered it, and that the sap is obeying the law given it by its great Creator.

In a large tree there are a vast number of these pipes, and if all the sap that is rising through them could be put together, it would form quite a stream. When we look at a forest of large trees, it is wonderful to think of the streams of living sap which are quietly rising through them, in a manner which we cannot understand.

It is from this sap that the whole tree takes its life. From it is formed the leaves, the fruit, and the flowers. Some kinds of sap are very valuable to us. The sugar which we use in great quantities is nothing but the sap of the sugar-cane; and the substance which we call india-rubber, and from which so many useful things are made, is the sap of a particular kind of tree. When incisions are made in the trunk of this tree, the sap runs out; and when once exposed to the air, it thickens and becomes elastic. Again, there are other trees from which people make different kinds of drink, like the date-milk, which flows from the date-tree.

Other trees have a great deal of gum in their sap, which oozes out when the tree is wounded. The sweet incense which is burnt at the altar is made from the gums of different trees, and chiefly from those which grow in Arabia, and other Eastern countries. Some gums are used in medicine, and in various kinds of manufactures.

One thing more I must tell you about the sap, before we finish this lesson. I have said that it flows *upwards* through pipes in the stems. From the stems it finds its way into the leaves, and then what becomes of it? The leaves take in air through the little holes with which they are pierced, and this air changes the sap, and makes it fit to feed the rest of the plant. For the sap, when first it rises, is not *perfect* sap; it requires to have a great deal done to it before it is in a state to form the nourishment of

the plant. When it has been made perfect by means of the air which it gets in the leaves, it flows back through another set of pipes into every part of the plant. In a great tree, the pipes by which the sap rises are in the wood, and those by which it flows downwards to the root again are in the inner bark. This circulation of the sap goes on through all the warmer months of the year. But in winter-time the motion of the sap ceases, and the leaves not being fed as usual, die and fall off, leaving the branches bare and naked. There are a few trees in which the sap circulates all the year through, and these preserve their leaves, and are called *evergreens*.

67.

THE CLOCK AND THE DIAL.

It happen'd on a cloudy morn,
A self-conceited clock in scorn
  A dial thus bespoke:
"My learned friend, if in thy power,
Tell me exactly what's the hour;
  I am upon the stroke."

The modest dial thus replied:
"That point I cannot now decide,
  The sun is in the shade:
My information drawn from him,
I wait till his enlivening beam
  Shall be again display'd."

"Wait for him, then," returned the clock,—
"I am not that dependent block,
  His counsel to implore;
One winding serves me for a week,
And hearken how the truth I speak,
  Ding, ding, ding, ding—just four."

While thus the boaster was deriding,
And magisterially deciding,
  A sunbeam clear and strong
Show'd on the line three quarters more,
And that the clock, in striking four,
  Had told his story wrong.

On this the dial calmly said
(More prompt to advise than to upbraid):
  "Friend, go, be regulated!
Thou answer'st without hesitation;
But he who trusts thy calculation
  Will frequently be cheated.

Observe my practice, shun pretence;
Not confidence, but evidence,
  An answer meet supplies.
Blush not to say, 'I cannot tell;'
Not speaking much, but speaking well,
  Denotes the truly wise."

68.

DESCRIPTIVE GEOGRAPHY. NO. IX.

INDIA AND CHINA.

mer-chan-dise, *goods sent out by merchants.*
por-ce-lain, *china, or fine earthenware.*

ESE are the two chief countries in Asia: they ntain by far the most people; indeed, it is said at more than half the people that are in the whole rld live in India and China. India, or Hindostan, a very large peninsula in the south of Asia. It more than nine times as large as Great Britain d Ireland put together. In the north are the imalaya mountains, whose snowy tops reach far ove the clouds. A very large portion of India, *wever, consists* of vast plains; the chief of them

is that great plain which covers the north-eastern part of the country, and is watered by the river Ganges, which runs down from the Himalaya mountains, and flows through the plain for fifteen hundred miles before it falls into the sea. The air in the mountains is cool and pleasant, but in the plains of India the heat is very hard to bear. Sometimes the sun scorches like a furnace; but in the great rains, which fall for two months every summer, the air is so heavy with the damp, and yet so hot, that it makes you feel tired all the day long. In the rainy season, some of the great rivers which flow into the Ganges overflow their banks for about a hundred miles, and make the country look like a sea. The Hindoos are very glad of this, for they live chiefly upon rice, which needs to be under water while it is growing. The Hindoo villages are surrounded with cocoa-palms and mango-trees, and there are plenty of bamboos every where. The bamboo is a sort of grass or cane; it pushes up a thick shoot, like asparagus at first, but in a very few weeks this young stem grows up to be forty or fifty feet high, and sends out stiff branches, sometimes armed with thorns. The stems are strong, and light too, being hollow, and they are of great use for building and making furniture; when split, they are woven into mats, and baskets, and sails for vessels. This useful plant grows all over the south of Asia. The most curious Indian tree is the banyan; its branches grow down till they touch the ground, strike root there, and spring up into new trees all joined to the old, so that one banyan is like a whole grove, and can shelter even thousands of persons under its branches. Peacocks and other beautiful birds live in the woods, and there are abundance of all the animals which are most useful for food. But troublesome insects and snakes are abundant also; and

where the woods are thickest, there are tigers and other fierce creatures. Monkeys are numerous every where; and the Hindoos allow them to be very troublesome, and yet will not kill them, for they look upon them as sacred animals. They honour kites also and serpents; and they worship many idols.

The great St. Francis Xavier preached in many parts of India, and converted great numbers of the people to the Christian faith. His body lies in the great church of Goa, a city which belongs to the Portuguese. In Ceylon, and in some other parts of India, many of the natives profess the Catholic faith, though by far the greater number are still idolaters.

Calcutta is the city where the English merchants chiefly reside, in order to carry on the trade with England. Rice, coffee, pepper, and sugar, all kinds of valuable dyes, silk, gold, and precious stones, form some of the valuable merchandise which we receive from India.

China lies on the eastern side of Asia. The country is watered by many large rivers, and there is a canal more than six hundred miles long, which joins the largest rivers to each other and to the sea. The banks of the canal and of the rivers are covered with towns and villages full of people and of bustle from daylight to sunset, then all becomes quiet. The number of people in eastern China is astonishing; even on the rivers and lakes there are thousands who dwell in floating houses, and live by catching fish and waterfowl. On the land you see neither meadows nor cattle, the Chinese want all their ground for cotton and corn and rice and fruit. They use no milk, so there are very few cows, and the sheep feed on wild pasture-lands *where nothing* but grass will grow.

The tea-plants, which are so useful to us as well as to the Chinese, grow on the lower hills, and the Chinese pluck the leaves one by one, with the greatest care. They are very industrious; they work beautifully in ivory and bamboo, and make much cotton and silk, and very fine porcelain. Their houses are always low, with roofs shaped like a tent; no chimneys, for a Chinaman does not make a fire in cold weather, but puts on one thick garment over another till he is warm enough; and the windows are filled with gauze or oil-paper instead of glass. The men wear long silk gowns; and their hair is plaited into a long tail which hangs down over their backs. Few women are seen out of doors in China. A Chinese lady could not well walk the streets, for she cannot stand very firmly upon her feet. They were bound up when she was a child, to prevent them from growing, and so they became mere shapeless lumps; but this is thought a beauty in China. So are very long nails; a lady's nails are sometimes long enough to be bound round her wrists. The chief city of China is Pekin, in the north. The English have the little island of Hongkong, in the south of China, and they have built a town there called Victoria.

The Chinese are idolaters; but for the last three hundred years a great number of Catholic Bishops and priests have preached among the people, and have converted many to the faith.

The Christians have often been persecuted by the Chinese emperors, and have been put to death, and made to suffer the most dreadful tortures; even in our own time there have been many glorious martyrs, both among the Chinese Christians and the European missionaries who labour among them.

It was in the little isle of Sancian, near Macao, that St. Francis Xavier expired in his last attempt

to reach the shores of China. Let us pray that, by the intercession of this great apostle, and the blood of her many martyrs, China may one day be brought within the fold of Christ.

69.

EARTHQUAKES AND VOLCANOES.

in-te-ri-or, *inside.* rap-id-ly, *quickly.*
cra-ter, *a mouth shaped like a cup.*
con-firm, *to make stronger.*

It is supposed by learned men who have carefully examined the earth on which we live, that the interior of this globe is not *solid,* like the hard rocks we see around us, but liquid, and that it is made liquid by intense heat. This great mass of melted mineral substance is enclosed in a sort of shell of solid rock, which forms the hard ground beneath our feet. It is thought that this solid shell is not more than thirty miles in thickness, and that beneath that depth a fierce fire is raging. This seems very wonderful and very awful to think of, and some persons may think also that it is very hard to believe. But there are many places where we have proof of the existence of this fire below the surface of the earth. It has at different times burst through its prison-walls, and made large rents in them: sometimes it has heaved up great mountains; at other times it has shaken the earth and made it open, swallowing up fields, towns, and vineyards; and sometimes we see hot fountains springing forth out of the depths of the earth, which shows us that beneath the surface there must be some great subterranean fire.

When this fire shakes the earth, and makes it rock or open, we call it an earthquake. In many places, earthquakes are constantly being felt, and often

cause great destruction and loss of life. Sometimes they are like a wave which rolls onwards, shaking houses, and even throwing them to the ground. At others, the shock comes straight up from the centre of the earth; and then people have been cast high up into the air by the force of the movement, and very often nothing more is felt than a kind of trembling.

In the year 1783, the whole of the southern part of Italy was visited by an earthquake, which scarcely left one house standing within the space of sixty miles. The top of a great mountain near Reggio was seen to move rapidly up and down. Large pieces of land, containing many fields, were carried a quarter of a mile from their former position, with their trees standing on them undisturbed. Great chasms also opened, one of which swallowed up a hundred cattle in a moment, and no fewer than 100,000 persons perished.

We have already said something on the subject of volcanoes, or burning mountains. There are many mountains in different parts of the world which bear evidence of having been pushed up out of the earth by some tremendous power which has forced them from beneath. In some of them, there are great rents or chasms, which are called craters, and these at times pour forth melted rock or lava, together with red-hot ashes and volumes of smoke. The lava runs like a river of fire down the side of the mountains, destroying every thing in its course. When first it comes forth, it is wonderfully beautiful, glowing like the melted iron which pours from the furnace; as it flows onward, it cools and hardens into stone, and no degree of heat which is to be found on the surface of the earth is sufficient again to melt it. The three most famous volcanoes in Europe are—Mount Vesuvius, near Naples, in Italy; Mount Etna, in Sicily; and Mount Hecla, in Iceland. These are

always more or less active, and at times the fire bursts forth with great violence, and then we call it an *eruption*. But even at other times the fire may be seen, and the fumes of the burning lava and brimstone may be felt by those who look into the craters of these mountains. The lava has poured from Mount Hecla in such quantities, as to form a wall round the base of the mountain seventy feet in height.

About the year 79 a dreadful eruption took place from Mount Vesuvius, by which the two cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum were destroyed. Herculaneum lay just at the foot of the mountain, and was overwhelmed by the hot streams of lava, which filled the streets and houses, killing every living inhabitant. Pompeii was six miles off, but was buried under the shower of ashes which fell upon it, and which was so thick as to darken the air for many days, the dust being carried as far as Rome, Africa, and Egypt. About a hundred years ago, these two cities were discovered, after having been buried for more than sixteen hundred years.

The houses and streets were cleared out, and every thing was found exactly as it had been left on the day when the dreadful catastrophe happened. Some skeletons were found in the ruins: one in the act of escaping, with some jewels in the bony fingers; another trying to cleave his way through the walls with a great axe; and another, that of a Roman sentinel, who had perished rather than desert the post assigned him.

There are also to be seen shops, full of the articles of a busy trade: in one place, a heap of lime prepared for making mortar; in another, bags of corn. In a chamber at Herculaneum, containing a bath for children, the skeletons were found of three little infants, who must have been forgotten or deserted when their parents escaped the fiery deluge; and

in the prisons, where you may still see the iron bars and the stone steps leading to the dungeons, were found the remains of two unhappy prisoners.

We know, from the words of our Lord and His Apostles, that this world will one day be destroyed by fire. We know also, that for those who refuse to obey God, a fire is reserved, more terrible than any fire which we know in this world. It is impossible to read of the secret fire which is raging only a few miles beneath our feet, without being reminded of these awful truths; and without feeling that all we know of the mysteries of creation tends to confirm our faith, and to deepen our dread of the tremendous judgments of God.

70.

STORIES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY. NO. V.

NEVILLE'S CROSS.

pat-ri-mo-ny, *inheritance.*
ex-ploits, *brave actions.* ma-rau-ders, *robbers.*
cor-por-al cloth, *the cloth on which the Most Holy Sacrament is laid after the Consecration.*
mo-lest-ed, *hurt, or disturbed.*

In the October of the year 1346, King Edward III. was encamped before the town of Calais, in France; and all the fighting men of England were gathered under his standard. He was engaged in a great war with France, during which he had gained the most splendid victory which had ever graced the English arms; and there was not a knight or a noble who did not feel eager to join in the exploits of the king and his gallant son, Edward the Black Prince. Very few soldiers were, therefore, left in England; and David Bruce, who was then king of Scotland, thought it was a good opportunity to lead an army across the

frontier which separated the two countries, believing that at such a time he should find no one to oppose him. So, at the head of 40,000 men, he entered Northumberland, and began plundering and laying waste the lands belonging to the see of Durham, which were then known by the name of the Patrimony of St. Cuthbert.

England, however, was not left quite so defenceless as he had imagined. The good queen, Philippa of Hainault, was ruling the kingdom in her husband's absence; and when she heard of the invasion of the King of Scots, she ordered the royal banner to be displayed, and called on all men to gather round it, and hasten to resist the enemy. She succeeded in collecting about 12,000 men; and putting herself at the head of this little army, she marched northwards, encouraging them by her presence to fear nothing, but to fight manfully for their country, and drive back the Scottish marauders to their own land.

She reached the town of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and there took up her residence; and King David, advancing within three miles of the place at the head of his troops, sent her a scornful message, challenging her to come out with her men, and he would give them battle. No doubt he thought that she would fear his powerful army, and would hasten to make some favourable terms of peace. But Philippa returned the brave answer, that she accepted his offer gladly, and in God's name, and that her men would all gladly risk their lives for the realm of their lord the king. It was the night of the 17th of October; the queen's troops had marched to Durham, and were mustered in the Bishop's park, whilst Philippa herself was lodged within his castle. Every one in the city knew well enough that a battle would be fought on the morrow, and many spent the night in

prayer. The prior of the abbey of Durham was a very holy monk; and that night, as he prayed, there appeared to him the great St. Cuthbert, the patron-saint of the city and the diocese. "Fear nothing," said the saint; "for to-morrow God will protect this city and the English nation. Rise, therefore, and do as I shall tell you: take the corporal-cloth which I was wont to use at Mass, and which is preserved in this abbey-church, and fasten it as a banner to the end of a lance; and to-morrow morning, when the sun shall have arisen, go with it to the spot on the west side of the city which is called the Red Hills, and there abide in prayer, nothing doubting." The prior did as he was commanded, and taking the saint's corporal-cloth, which was kept in the cathedral as a precious relic, he fastened it to a spear; and when morning dawned, he and his monks hastened to the Red Hills, and fixing the spear in the ground, knelt around it in earnest prayer.

Meanwhile, a very different scene was going on at a little distance. The English troops had drawn up just outside the walls; and Queen Philippa, mounted on a noble white charger, now appeared and rode through their ranks, calling on them with cheerful words to fight like gallant men for the love of God and of England. They answered her with shouts of applause; they were, for the most part, stout country peasants, led on by their parish-priests, who did not think it unbecoming their sacred character to appear on the field of battle at a time when their country was threatened with such danger, and when all the fighting-men of England were across the Channel. The Archbishop of York was one of the chief commanders of the little army; the other was the brave Lord Ralph Neville. When the queen had finished her address, she bade the men farewell;

and commending them to God and St. George, she rode back to Durham.

Then the battle began: it was fierce and bloody; but the brave English archers gained the day. Every English countryman, in those times, knew how to use the long-bow, and on that memorable day they used it well. Their hearts were full of the love of their country, and a loyal determination to fight in defence of their homes and their altars, as stoutly as King Edward's gallant knights were doing for honour and renown. And so they beat back the wild Scots, and took King David himself prisoner; and his followers once more retreated across the border, and the invasion was at an end.

When the news of the victory was brought to Queen Philippa, she mounted her horse again, and rode to the battle-field. Then she thanked her brave soldiers, with tears in her eyes, and ordered that the wounded should be well taken care of. As to the prior and his monks, all through the bloody day they had kept their post on the Red Hills, holding aloft St. Cuthbert's banner, and calling on God to aid the English arms. Again and again flying parties of the Scots had ridden past them, but they had never once been molested: a wonderful protection was granted them, and it was as though they had been hidden from their enemies' sight. The prior afterwards caused the corporal-cloth to be fixed in the centre of a sumptuous banner, which was laid up in the cathedral, and which, on more than one occasion afterwards, was borne in battle against the Scottish invaders; and never was it displayed on any field but, by the special grace of God and the intercession of St. Cuthbert, it brought victory.

The battle had been fought on the lands of Lord Ralph Neville; and, in memory of the event, he

caused a beautiful cross of carved stone to be put up upon the field, that men, as they passed by, might say a prayer for the souls of all those who had fallen in that day's fight. The remains of this cross are still to be seen, and it gave to the battle the name by which it has always been known,—"the battle of Neville's Cross."

71.

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND.

I.

Ye mariners of England,
That guard our native seas;
Whose flag has braved a thousand years
The battle and the breeze;
Your glorious standard launch again,
To match another foe;
And sweep through the deep
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

II.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave;
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And ocean was their grave;
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell,
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

III.

Britannia needs no bulwark,*
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain-waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak†
She quells the floods below,
As they roar on the shore,
When the stormy winds do blow;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

IV.

The meteor-flag‡ of England
Shall yet terrific burn;
Till danger's troubled night depart,
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean-warriors,
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

* *Bulwark*, a wall of defence. The poet means to say, that the best walls of defence for England are her ships, and that she does not stand in need of fortifications whilst her coasts are so well guarded by her ships-of-war.

† Ships-of-war are built of oak, which is here called *native* oak, because the oak is grown in our own island.

‡ The English flag is called a *meteor*-flag, because it is red, and so may be said poetically to gleam in the air like a burning meteor.

72.

A CHAPTER ON WOOD.

du-ra-ble, *lasting.*
lat-i-tude, *the distance of any place north or south of the equator.*
in-fe-ri-or, *lower, worse.*
punc-ture, *to prick, pierce a small hole.*

One fine afternoon, Frank Miller was returning home with his father, after a long country ramble. The day was sultry, and they were both glad to sit down and rest awhile under a large tree which cast its shadow on the grass. Frank soon espied some acorns lying on the ground; and as he picked them up, he observed, "I suppose this tree must be an oak-tree, as there are so many acorns lying about under the branches."

"Yes," replied his father, "and a noble one it is; but, as it seems, it is not destined to stand here very long;" and he pointed to some figures chalked upon the trunk, which he explained to Frank had been put there by the owner, to mark it out as one of those trees which he intended to cut down.

"But why should people cut down these beautiful trees?" asked Frank. "I am sure, if this field belonged to me, I should be very sorry to lose their shade."

"That is likely enough," said his father; "but trees have other uses besides giving us shade. This oak-tree, when it is cut down, will be sawn into planks, and each plank will have a considerable value; and the owner probably cares more for the money which he will thus gain, than for the loss to the beauty of his field."

"But," persisted Frank, "why should they cut down oak-trees? If they wanted wood, they might

choose trees that were less beautiful, such as those ugly poplars or sycamores."

"But the wood of poplars and sycamores would be of little or no value," said his father. "There are many purposes for which it is requisite to use a hard and durable wood, and none is harder or stronger than that of the oak. If we were to build our ships, for instance, of nothing but poplar-wood, I fancy we should not have much reason to boast of our navy."

"Are all our ships, then, built of oak?" said Frank.

"Most of them are," replied his father, "and especially our ships-of-war. If a ship were built of some softer kind of wood, the cannon-balls, when they struck her sides, would splinter her timbers; but oak-wood is so hard, that it does not splinter, and the balls pass through the planks, making clean holes. Now in a battle at sea, these wooden splinters are very dangerous, and often wound as badly as balls do, besides which, the splintered holes are much more difficult to repair. This is one reason why we build our war-ships of oak; another is, as I have just said, that it is more durable than other timber."

"Father," said Frank, "I was just thinking what a number of things are made of wood. It makes me wonder how there can be any trees left standing. In the timber-yard near our house, men are always at work sawing up trees; they must be cutting some down every year, and yet we do not seem to have fewer trees. Where do they all come from?"

"You forget," said his father, "that if trees are being constantly cut down, they are also constantly growing, and young ones are every year being planted. But you must also remember, that by far the greater quantity of timber that we use does not grow in England, but comes to us from other countries."

"Indeed," said Frank; "I thought England had been the great place for oaks. One reads so much of British oak; and you once told me that the oak-leaf and acorn was an emblem of England."

"True," replied his father; "but there are other trees the wood of which is used besides that of the oak, and one in particular, great quantities of which come to us from abroad, and which is, if possible, more useful, though its wood is neither so hard nor so beautiful as oak. Can you guess what I am thinking of?"

Frank thought of the dining-room table and chairs, and guessed mahogany; but his father shook his head. "Think of the dining-room *floor*, instead of the table," he said, "and you will be nearer the mark."

"The floor," said Frank, in a puzzled tone, "is covered with a carpet, and under the carpet are boards—*deal*-boards; but then there is no such thing as a deal-tree?"

His father laughed. "Deal is a name we give to fir-planks when they are sawn up. All the deal-planks which we use are made of the wood of firs or pines."

"And do they not grow in England?" said Frank. "Surely that dark plantation yonder is a fir-wood. I can see the long tapering branches quite plainly."

"Firs grow in England certainly," said his father; "but there are other countries where they grow much more plentifully. When we reach the house, I will show you on the map some of the countries from which we get most of our timber; it is time now that we make the best of our way homewards."

Frank did not forget his father's promise; and in the evening, when his father and mother were

sitting by the fire, he brought his map, and begged to be shown the countries where the fir-trees grew. His father took a soft pencil, and drew a line across the map from east to west. It ran through the middle of Sweden and the south of Norway, and just cut off the top of Scotland; then, passing on to North America, it ran down lower on the map, and went through that great continent a little below the great chain of lakes and rivers which Frank had learnt to distinguish as dividing British America from the United States. "Now, Frank," said his father, "you must understand that there are a great many different climates on the surface of this world of ours. In these different climates grow different plants and trees, and the fir-tree does not belong to the same climate as the oak."

"But I thought you told me that they both grew in England," said Frank.

"So they do," said his father; "but if you travel a little farther north, you will come to colder countries, in which the oak-tree will not grow at all. I have marked this line on the map to show you the exact boundary between the oak-countries and those in which the only trees which are to be seen are firs, pines, and birches. See here," he continued, marking a little dot on the coast of Norway, about the latitude of 62°, "here are the last oaks which you will meet with in Europe; there are forests in plenty to the north of this line, but they are all fir-forests, and it is from these that we get our largest supply of fir-timber."

Frank looked at the map, and found that the countries his father had marked off with his pencil were Norway, Sweden, part of Russia, and the northern half of North America.

"A great deal of the timber which we use," continued his father, "comes to us from America, but

it is not nearly so good as that which we get fr
the northern countries of Europe. In America, t
use deal-timber in building ships; but ships so c
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Can you guess which it is?"

Frank thought for some minutes; and his mot
helped out his reflections by drawing a tall m
which looked so like the long straight stem of a
tree, that he guessed at once.

"Yes," said his father, "not only the masts,
also the other smaller spars of a ship are made of
stems and branches of these trees. They are exa
fitted for the purpose, being perfectly straight,
also elastic, that is, ready to bend to the wind,
therefore less likely to snap in a violent storm.
best masts come from Norway, and from Riga,
Russia; and these last are mostly made from
trees which grow on the banks of the river Dnie
The timber which comes to us from the north
countries of Europe we call *Baltic timber;* and n
I think, I need hardly explain to you why we giv
that name."

"I suppose," said Frank, "it has something
do with the Baltic Sea, which lies here in the mid
between Russia and Sweden."

"Yes," said his father; "the shores of this Ba
Sea are quite covered with forests of pines and f
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melancholy character. There is no variety in th
appearance; their foliage is dark and gloomy,
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it is not nearly so good as that which we get from the northern countries of Europe. In America, they use deal-timber in building ships; but ships so constructed are by no means so durable as those built of oak. Nevertheless, there is one part of every ship which is obliged to be made out of a fir-tree. Can you guess which it is?"

Frank thought for some minutes; and his mother helped out his reflections by drawing a tall mast, which looked so like the long straight stem of a fir-tree, that he guessed at once.

"Yes," said his father, "not only the masts, but also the other smaller spars of a ship are made of the stems and branches of these trees. They are exactly fitted for the purpose, being perfectly straight, and also elastic, that is, ready to bend to the wind, and therefore less likely to snap in a violent storm. Our best masts come from Norway, and from Riga, in Russia; and these last are mostly made from the trees which grow on the banks of the river Dnieper. The timber which comes to us from the northern countries of Europe we call *Baltic timber;* and now, I think, I need hardly explain to you why we give it that name."

"I suppose," said Frank, "it has something to do with the Baltic Sea, which lies here in the middle between Russia and Sweden."

"Yes," said his father; "the shores of this Baltic Sea are quite covered with forests of pines and firs. Travellers describe these forests as having a singularly melancholy character. There is no variety in their appearance; their foliage is dark and gloomy, and the wind whistles through the pine-branches, making a sad kind of music. However, they form one of the principal sources of wealth to the countries in which they grow, not only from the sale of the timber, but from the turpentine, pitch, and resin which are

obtained from them, all of which are valuable articles of commerce. The great fir-forests of North America have the same character, and are even of greater extent; but the timber which they yield is far inferior in quality to that of the Baltic."

Frank was much pleased at the description of the great pine-woods, and said he had often listened to the wind whistling through the fir-trees in the plantation, and had thought it sounded like a kind of music. But he could not feel quite contented to think the fir-tree more useful than his favourite oak. "If all our ships are built of oak-wood, he said, "we have surely reason to call the oak a useful tree."

"We have indeed," said his father; "I only meant, when I compared the two, that deal was in more common use for many useful purposes. There are, however, some things for which we cannot use deal, because it is not hard or durable enough, and then we find the benefit of having plenty of stout oak-timber. But you will be pleased when I tell you that the oak-tree has one use to us, besides its timber, which the fir-tree has not, and that it helps in the manufacture of one of the most important things which has ever been discovered by man."

"What is that?" said Frank.

"Something," continued his father, "which helps you to think, and helps you to communicate your thoughts to others; it is *ink*, without which you would have no books to read, and without which the grand invention of printing would be altogether useless."

"But what have oaks to do with ink?" said Frank.

"That is what I am going to tell you," said his father. "I daresay you have often played with the oak-apples which you have found growing on the oak-leaves."

"Yes," replied Frank; "and I have sometimes

been puzzled to think why it was that the oak had two kinds of fruit, for acorns are the fruit of the oak also."

"But oak-apples, as we call them, are not fruit at all," said his father; "they are swellings produced by a small insect, that lays its egg in a hole, which it punctures in the leaf. Now there is an insect which in the same way pierces the bark of a particular kind of oak-tree found growing in all the countries of Asia Minor, and which produces swellings something like the oak-apple in their nature. The bark swells up round the egg which has been laid within it, and when the egg is hatched the grub feeds on the substance of the swelling. These swellings are called gall-nuts, and they form one of the principal ingredients in the manufacture of ink. And besides this, oak-bark is the principal material used in tanning leather; so that you see we have no reason to undervalue this noble tree, and I think you may fairly place it, if you like, on a level with the pine and the fir."

Frank was delighted to hear this defence of the oak-tree, and declared he would plant some acorns, that there might be more of these beautiful trees. He begged his father not to rub out the mark he had made to show where the last oaks grew in Norway, and to amuse him his mother drew a little oak-tree to mark the spot.

73.

A CHAPTER ON WOOD—(*continued*).

in-spect, *to look at.* dens-er, *thicker.*
ref-use, *rubbish,* tor-rid, *very hot.*
shin-gles, *thin pieces of wood.*
con-fla-gra-tion, *a burning.*
in-flam-ma-ble, *easily kindled.*
tro-pi-cal, *belonging to hot climates.*

For some time after the conversation he had held with his father, Frank amused himself by inspecting the different woods which he saw, and determining in his own mind which were oak and which were deal. He satisfied himself that the new park-palings which were being put up were made of oak, and pleased himself with imagining that the mast of every fishing-vessel he saw had once grown in the stately melancholy forests on the banks of the Dnieper. But there were many questions which he wanted to ask : he had not forgotten the dining-room table, and wondered where the mahogany came from; and he felt curious to know what turpentine, pitch, and resin had to do with fir-trees, and why they formed valuable articles of commerce. One morning, therefore, finding his mother alone at her work, he begged her to satisfy his curiosity on these points. Before doing so, she desired him to run and fetch her one of the chips from the oak-palings, and to ask the workmen at the same time for a small piece of deal. He soon returned with the two bits in his hand, and she made him remark how much softer the deal was than the oak. "There is another difference in these two woods," she said. "The wood of the fir-tree contains a certain juice which is highly inflammable, and which is called *turpentine.* When the turpentine is distilled, a substance remains, to which we give the name of *resin.* And *tar* is obtained by burning the roots and

refuse parts of the fir-tree in pits or ovens. A thick black matter oozes out of them, and falls to the bottom, which is the tar, and this when boiled down becomes *pitch*. These resinous substances are found in all trees of the fir kind; but there is a particular tree called the pitch-pine, which yields more of this juice than any other. If you now put your two chips of wood into the fire, you will see how much more readily the deal will burn than the oak, and this is on account of the resin which it contains."

Frank did as his mother told him, and found that the chip of deal caught fire directly and burnt with a bright flame, whilst the oak scarcely blazed at all. "But still," he said, "I do not understand why these things form such valuable articles of commerce."

"Because," replied his mother, "they are used in a great number of manufactures. And besides this, tar and pitch are of great use in preventing things from decaying which are exposed to wet. The sides of ships are, therefore, covered with pitch, and their ropes are well soaked in tar. And the seams between their planks are stopped up with tow dipped in pitch and resin, in order to keep out the water. In Switzerland the people often roof their houses with shingles made from the wood of the larch-tree, which grows in great abundance in that country. At first the roof appears white; but in a year or two it becomes quite black, and all the joints get stopped up by the resin which the sun draws out from the pores of the wood."

"But how is that?" asked Frank. "I thought these fir-trees belonged to the northern countries only. Switzerland is quite to the south; more south a great deal than England."

"That is true," said his mother, "and I am glad you observed it, because without a little explanation

you would not understand how it is that the plants which belong to the same *climate* are often found growing in different *latitudes*. First tell me, Frank, what we mean by a climate?" "Whether a country is hot or cold," he replied: "the countries which lie round the equator are hot countries, and those at the poles are cold countries; are they not? and then the countries which lie between are the temperate ones." "But," said his mother, "there are other things which make a country hot or cold besides its distance from the equator. A very high mountain, even in the torrid zone, will often have its summit clothed in snow. The reason of this is, that the air gets thinner as we get farther from the surface of the earth, and thin air is not able to retain as much warmth from the rays of the sun as a denser atmosphere. On a high mountain in the torrid zone, therefore, you will find a great many varieties of climate, and each of these climates will produce its own plants. At the bottom you will find the spices and tropical plants; then higher up, you will get into a more temperate region, where, perhaps, the olive and the fig will be found growing; then higher up again, the English oak, and above that the fir-tree; and so on, till at last you reach the region of snow, where there is no vegetation at all to be seen. Now the Swiss mountains are so high, that in many parts the climate is much the same as that of Norway or Sweden, and hence we find the same pine-forests which distinguish those more northern countries."

"Mamma," said Frank, "this is rather difficult to understand." "You will understand it better when you have learnt a little more of geography," said his mother; "but having, at any rate, satisfied you that there *are* fir-trees in Switzerland, you may, perhaps, find more amusement in hearing how

the people go hunting for the turpentine and resin."

Frank prepared himself to listen, and his mother continued:

"About the month of August, a great number of men, many of whom travel for the purpose from the Italian side of the Alps, set out in order to gather the turpentine. Each man provides himself with a tin horn ending with a sharp point, and a large tin bottle, which he fastens to his girdle. These people, from long habit, have acquired a facility in climbing, which nothing but practice could give them. They will mount in a few minutes to the top of the loftiest firs by means of little irons fastened in their shoes; they only use one hand to help themselves in climbing, for with the other they carry their horn, and with its sharp end they break the little bladders of turpentine, which are found on the bark of the tree, and catch it as it runs out with the broad end of the horn, which they afterwards empty into the bottle at their girdles. In the course of their journeys, these turpentine-gatherers lead a life of peril and adventure, scarcely less exciting than that of the chamois-hunters; climbing down ravines and up the steepest crags in search of the Alpine larch, which yields them the largest quantity of turpentine. When their tin bottles are filled, they are emptied into goat-skins, and these are conveyed on the men's backs to the place of sale."

"Well, mother," said Frank, "I think I shall never think now of the Swiss mountains, or the Baltic Sea, without seeing the pines and the larches, and the turpentine-gatherers clambering about among the crags. Do they get turpentine also from the American pine-forests?"

"*Certainly,*" said his mother; "and the inflammable character of this wood is one cause of those

great fires which sometimes take place in the American forests, and destroy thousands of magnificent trees. Travellers say that there is not a grander sight than one of these immense forests in flames; and the conflagration is supposed very often to take place from the rubbing together of the dry branches of the pines as they are tossed by the wind; the wood ignites by the friction, and soon bursts into a flame, which spreads rapidly."

Frank thanked his mother, and said he should never have thought there could have been so much that was amusing to say about a fir-tree. "And now," he continued, "I do want to know something about other trees. I know that the dining-room table and chairs are mahogany; but the other day I looked at the cabinet in my grandmother's room, and it was different from any wood I ever saw before. The floor, too, is of another kind of wood, and highly polished."

"You are right," said his mother; "your grandmother's cabinet, which is a very old one, is made of *walnut*, a wood which was much used before the introduction of mahogany; and the polished floor of her parlour is made of *yew*. People did not formerly use carpets so generally as we now do; and to give their bare floors a more sightly appearance, they made them of some handsome wood, which took a fine polish. These yew-floors are often to be seen in old houses; you will like to know that it is the same tree out of which our old English archers used to make their bows."

"But why is not walnut-wood still used?" said Frank; "I thought it very beautiful."

"It is still used for some purposes," replied his mother; "but mahogany is much handsomer, and is now generally preferred. Formerly walnut was the most ornamental wood that could be obtained

in England, for mahogany has not been in use much more than a century and a half."

"And where does it come from?" said Frank; "from the hot countries, or the cold?"

His mother opened the map, and showed him the West-Indian Islands between North and South America. "Jamaica and Honduras are the two places whence it is chiefly exported," she said; "but it grows in almost all these islands. It was first introduced into England in the year 1724, and that by an accident. The captain of a West-Indian ship had brought home some logs to use merely as ballast; that is, as a weight to make his vessel sail steadily. He found his brother, who was a physician in London, busily employed in building a house; he gave him the logs, thinking they might be of use to him. But the carpenters would have nothing to do with the outlandish wood, which they soon found out was too hard for any of their tools to cut. Some time after, the wife of this physician was in want of a candle-box, and she told the cabinet-maker to make it out of one of the logs of mahogany which had been thrown aside. He was unwilling at first, because he thought it would spoil his tools; but he at last consented. When the box was made, and polished, it far outshone any thing in the physician's new house; and people came from far and near to look at it. A lady of rank had a bureau made from one of the logs; and from this time the use of mahogany was gradually extended, till it became general.

"Articles of mahogany furniture were once formed of the solid wood, which made them very expensive; but a modern invention has rendered them much cheaper. A log of mahogany is now cut into very thin pieces, called veneers, by sharp saws; and these veneers are nicely glued upon pine, so that we can

have now what looks like a mahogany table, though it is really made of pine, with a covering of mahogany outside. Such a table is much cheaper than if it were all mahogany."

"How very curious!" said Frank; "and so after this the walnut-trees were left growing in peace and quiet. But tell me, mamma, what sort of a tree does the mahogany come from? is it like an oak, or a pine?"

"Neither one nor the other," said his mother: "it is a very large tree indeed, with leaves of a reddish yellow, and it bears bunches of white flowers which grow in large spikes or clusters. The West-Indian negroes are employed in hunting for these trees, as our turpentine-gatherers hunt for the larch. They go out in bands of fifty together, and make their way into the thick woods; then one climbs the loftiest tree he can find, and thence attentively surveys the surrounding forest. A well-trained eye easily discovers the peculiar colour of the mahogany-leaves even at a great distance, and at the sight the huntsman descends the tree, and marking the direction, makes his way with his companions to the spot. The trees are then cut down, their branches lopped off, and the great logs dragged to the nearest river by means of trucks drawn by cattle. An immense number of people are employed in this trade, which is very profitable, as you may guess when I tell you that a single tree is sometimes worth as much as 1000*l.*"

"Well," said Frank, "I do wish I knew about all the different kinds of wood; it seems to me that there is something curious or amusing to be said of all of them."

"My dear boy," said his mother, "I cannot undertake to tell you about them all, for it would take us many days to say *all* that is to be said upon any subject. But you see how much

there is to be learnt about common things which is worth knowing; and this will encourage you to observe for yourself, and give you an interest in reading, and thus acquire stores of useful knowledge.

74.

THE BIRD.

THE bird let loose in eastern skies,
When hastening fondly home,
Ne'er stoops to earth her wing, nor flies
Where idle warblers roam.

But high she shoots, through air and light,
Above all low delay,
Where nothing earthly bounds her flight,
Nor shadows dim her way.

So grant me, Lord, from every care
And stain of passion free,
Aloft, through virtue's purer air,
To hold my course to Thee.

No sin to cloud, no lure to stay
My soul as home she springs;
Thy sunshine on her joyful way,
Thy freedom in her wings.

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